

SIGHT AND SOUND

PRICE
SIXPENCE

AUTUMN 1935
VOL. 4. No 15



PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE



Not every film made in London is a

★ **LONDON FILM** ★
PRODUCTION

Only those bearing the hall mark of quality—

BIG BEN



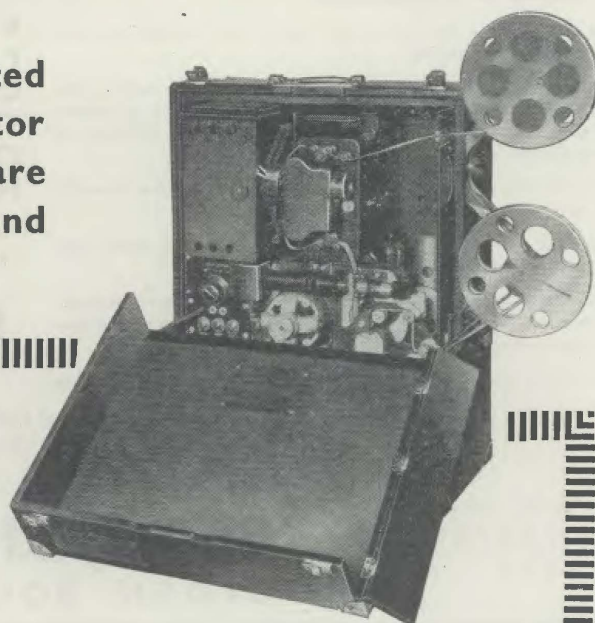
These films are **LONDON FILM PRODUCTIONS**

Distributed by **UNITED ARTISTS** Produced by **ALEXANDER KORDA**



16 mm. SOUND FILM PROJECTOR

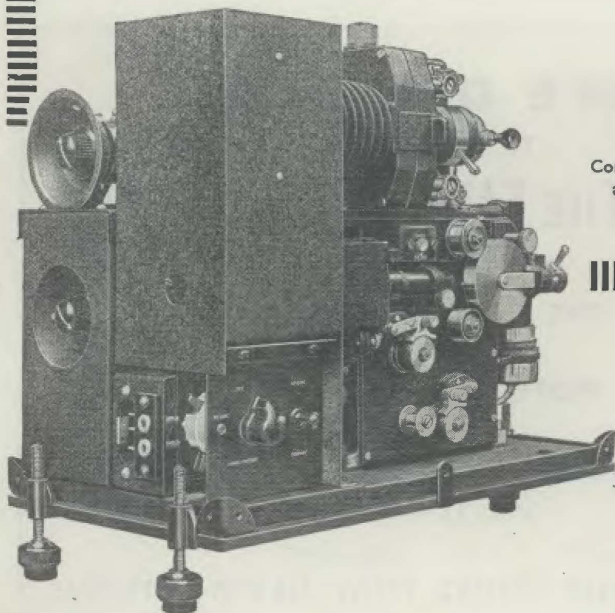
The BTH Company in 1931, produced the first 16 mm. Sound Film Projector in the world. Later equipments are the results of practical experience and further research.



Type A Equipment.
Suitable for classroom
and small audiences.

£135

Complete with Speaker
and Spares Cabinet.



£175

Complete with Speaker
and Spares Cabinet.

Type B Equipment.
Particularly suitable for
industrial publicity and
larger audiences.

S.M.P.E., or D.I.N., standard films.

For BEST TONAL QUALITY

have your 35 mm. sound films reduced
to 16 mm. by the

**BTH OPTICAL
REDUCTION METHOD**

Write or ring Sound Reproducer Sales—

BTH RUGBY

THE BRITISH THOMSON-HOUSTON COMPANY LIMITED, RUGBY, ENGLAND

A2034N

You must see a demonstration of the new 16-mm. "WUNDATONE" Portable (sound-on-film) Talking Picture Outfit

1.—The "WUNDATONE" portable apparatus is housed in two beautifully finished walnut cases, containing (a) Projector Amplifier, and (b) Loud-speaker.

2.—It operates both silent and sound films running at 16 or 24 frames per second.

3.—A special 12-armed Maltese Cross movement permits the use of a large diameter intermittent sprocket. This eliminates slipping and jumping and enables worn films to be satisfactorily projected.

4.—A pilot light is fitted inside the Projector, so that no other light is necessary whilst changing films.

5.—All principal controls for focusing, framing, volume and switches are situated for simple operation.

6.—The film spools (400 or 800 ft.) are supported on a detachable bracket outside the Projector case. This bracket is packed into the Loud-speaker for transport purposes.

7.—Only one point connection to any lamp socket or wall plug

**STUDY
THESE
BRIEF
POINTS
CLOSELY
THEN LET
IT SPEAK
FOR ITSELF**

Its cost is

£105

complete

is necessary, as the consumption is below the normal rating of these fittings. Any standard A.C. supply from 100 to 200 volts is suitable.

8.—The valves used in the Amplifier are standard types which are obtainable from all wireless dealers.

9.—Simple geared hand rewind.

10.—Constant speed induction type Motor.

11.—Silent running transmission gears and bearings enclosed in sealed oil bath, thus eliminating the necessity for oiling.

12.—Interlocked switching ensures that lamp cannot be on unless the motor is running, thus avoiding the possibility of blistering the film. The lamp-house is fitted with forced draught cooling system.

13.—Cabinet is totally enclosed during projection.

14.—The "WUNDATONE" is ENTIRELY BRITISH MADE.

15.—12 Months' Guarantee.

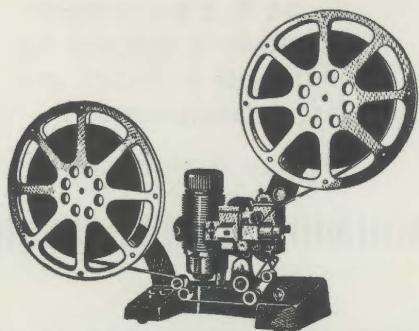
The "WUNDATONE" is ideal for Schools and Colleges, Village Halls, Lecture Halls, Club Rooms, Canteens, Hospitals, Railway Trains, Churches, Ships, Hotels, the Home, Business Purposes, Political Propaganda, Publicity Schemes.

Telephone
GERRARD
3 6 9 5 — 6

FOR A DEMONSTRATION, WITHOUT OBLIGATION, WRITE TO

S. P. EQUIPMENTS LTD.
9 GOLDEN SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

Telegrams
DELIGHTED
Piccy, London



**WRITE US FOR ADVICE ON
HOME TALKIES
and HOME MOVIES**

We know of no better service than ours and our wide experience is at your disposal in the form of expert advice on any cine subject or problem. We are the sole concessionaires for "Kintosound" Sound-on-disc apparatus and specialise in post-Synchronization of cine films, and can show you how it is done. We have an extensive film Library—all the latest releases are included. Latest catalogue of up-to-date apparatus free and post free.

'Phone: City 1124-5-6.

CITY SALE

& EXCHANGE (1929) LTD.
59/60 CHEAPSIDE, LONDON, E.C.2

WE OFFER

TO THE READERS OF "SIGHT & SOUND"

THE FINEST EXAMPLES

OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ART OF TO-DAY

THE FAMOUS SOVIET FILM CLASSICS:

PUDOVKIN'S

MOTHER and STORM OVER ASIA

EISENSTEIN'S

BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN - OCTOBER
and THE GENERAL LINE

ROOM'S

THE GHOST THAT NEVER RETURNS

KOZINTSEV & TRAUBERG'S

NEW BABYLON

ETC.

Are now available for hire or purchase on
16 mm. non-flam stock at
ordinary film-library prices from

KINO FILMS (1935) LTD 84, GRAY'S INN RD.
LONDON, W.C.1
HOLBORN 1760

KAMM SOUND EQUIPMENT

For the
FINEST REPRODUCTION
the BEST FILMS
and the
BEST SCREEN RESULTS
you MUST use
35 mm. APPARATUS.

LATEST **KAMM** installations

Workshop College

Bisley School.

*Central Flying School
Upavon*

For the
MOST RELIABLE
SIMPLEST and
CHEAPEST, capable
of dealing with the
LATEST HIGH-
FIDELITY RECORDING

**YOU
MUST HAVE
KAMM**

PRICES from
£125 Complete

Made by the oldest
firm of Kinematograph
Manufacturers in the
Country.

Professional type equip-
ment. Not a Toy.

Demonstrations arranged

KAMM & Co. Ltd. 27, Powell Street,
LONDON, E.C.1

BRITISH CAPITAL
BRITISH BRAINS
BRITISH LABOUR

IN FACT

ALL BRITISH

Film Art

**independent
film quarterly**

NUMBER 6, appearing at the end of October,
includes articles by:

John Grierson, Leonard Hacker,
Denis Johnston, Robert Fairthorne,
Kirk Bond, Nancy Cunard,
Marie Seton, John C. Moore,
Irene Nicholson.

Also reviews, stills, news, etc.

Published from:—

**5, JOUBERT STUDIOS,
JUBILEE PLACE, LONDON, S.W.3**

1/- per copy, 1/1 post free
4/4 post free, per annum

INDUSTRIAL FILMS

of

EDUCATIONAL INTEREST

These Films may be obtained from the under-
mentioned Firm on loan to Educational
Authorities.

Size: 16mm. or 35mm.

5 reels

SOUND

The following separate and distinct 5 reel
programmes are available:

THIS PROGRESS WHEELS ONWARD MILES AHEAD

Each deals with the manufacture and use of
motor cars and is also available in Silent form.

Also

TAKE THE WHEEL

(6 reels, 35 mm. Sound)

THE

AUSTIN MOTOR CO., LTD.
LONGBRIDGE BIRMINGHAM

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

Telephone : Museum 0607-8

The British Film Institute exists "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its objects are:—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

HOW TO OBTAIN MEMBERSHIP

The Institute being a Company limited by guarantee it is necessary for intending members to fill up a form of application which will be forwarded on request. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded for perusal if desired. Corporate Bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. Such subscribers would entitle the affiliated organization to commensurate privilege of membership.

Members will be entitled to receive publications issued by the Institute, including (1) the official organ, SIGHT AND SOUND; (2) a monthly review of entertainment films and films suitable for educational or instructional purposes; (3) an annual report on the year's work and (4) informative leaflets on technical and other matters.

Copies of SIGHT AND SOUND are available to non-members at the price of 6d. per copy (7½d. including postage) and a subscription form will be found below.

Further particulars will be supplied on request.

SIGHT AND SOUND SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

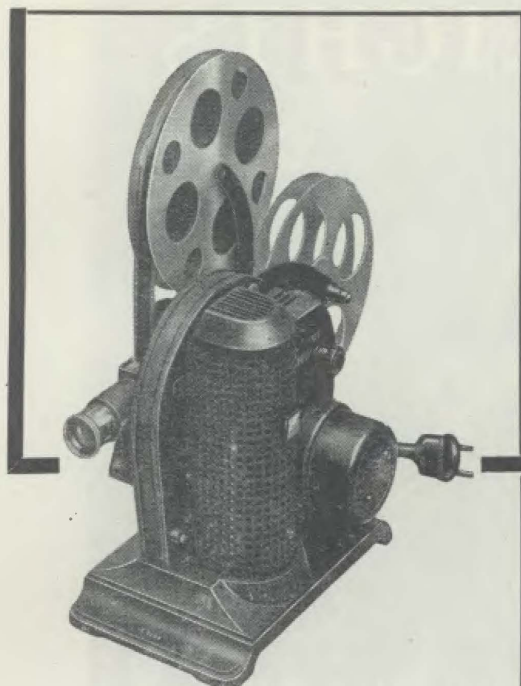
Subscription for Four Issues, Post Free, 2s. 6d.

Please enter the following name as a subscriber to SIGHT AND SOUND for four Quarterly Issues commencing with the.....issue. I/we enclose Cheque Postal Order

for the sum of £ : :

Name and Address.....
Block Letters

This order may be handed to your newsagent or bookseller or sent direct to The British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.



Send for illustrated booklets describing Agfa 16mm. cameras, projectors and films.

AGFA PHOTO, LTD.,

1-4, LAURENCE ST., HIGH ST.,
LONDON, W.C.2

Sole distributors of Agfa photographic products for U.K. and Irish Free State.

a simple inexpensive AGFA PROJECTOR

the AGFA MOVECTOR DOMESTINO 16mm.

is essentially economical in first cost and running cost. Simplicity of operation is its keynote; note the easy threading and compact design, with built in resistance, special cooling device and rigidly attached motor. Connects to any electric supply (A.C. or D.C.). Fitted with 50mm. focus lens and 100 watt projector lamp. Takes reels up to 400 ft. Complete ready for use.

PRICE £17 CARRYING CASE 15/-

A COMPLETE 16 mm. SOUND FILM MAKING AND SHOWING EQUIPMENT

RCA Photophone Sound
Camera - - £130
Studio Attachment extra
Critical Focuser - £10
Prices do not apply in I.F.S.



RCA Photophone
16mm. Reproducer £175

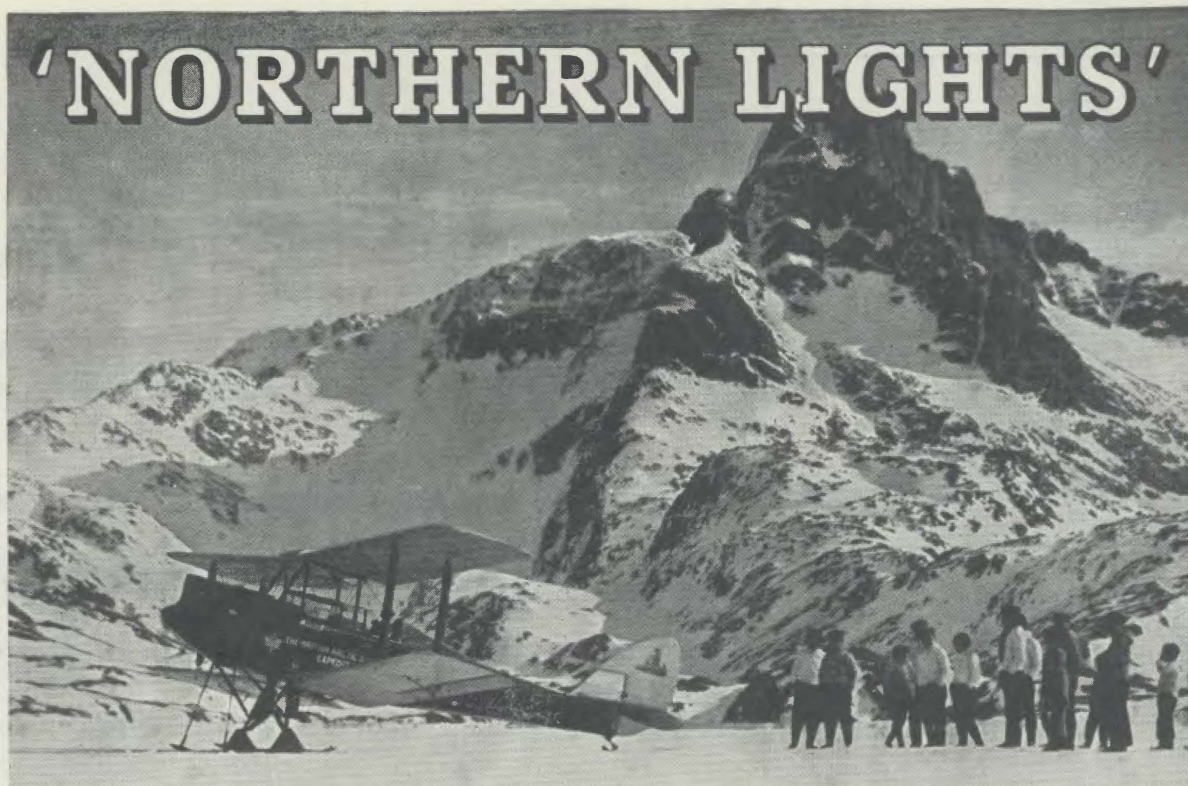
All RCA's vast experience has been built into the new 16mm. Sound Camera and Reproducer. Talking pictures for educational, cultural and industrial purposes are now a more practical proposition than ever before.

It is impossible to describe here the many technical features of these models or to give you any idea of the results which can be obtained. We shall be only too glad, however, to send literature or give a full demonstration in our private theatre at Electra House.



ELECTRA HOUSE, VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, LONDON, W.C.2

Telephone: Temple Bar 2971/5



FILM OF A GREAT ADVENTURE

Now offered by Western Electric Road Show Service

"Northern Lights," another remarkable documentary sound film—worthy successor to the famous "Everest" picture—has now been added to the Western Electric Film Library. "Northern Lights" is the sound film record of the British Arctic Air Route Expedition and is something more than a very unusual and beautiful picture; it is a true film of one of

the world's finest stories of human endeavour, containing a wealth of authentic detail and shows the indomitable courage and spirit that still exists in Britain to-day. "Northern Lights" is a picture of wide educational value, bringing geography vividly to life and unfolding the story of one of the greatest arctic explorations.

This unique film is now available for immediate showing in schools, clubs and societies, through the Western Electric Road Show Service—a Service which provides for one moderate, inclusive fee, FILMS—PORTABLE SOUND APPARATUS—SERVICES OF A SKILLED OPERATOR. Write for further details of this "All-In" Hiring Service and of "Northern Lights."

Editorial Offices
THE BRITISH
FILM INSTITUTE,
4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1.
TELEPHONE :
MUSEUM 0607/8

Editorial Secretary :
R. R. TAYLOR

SIGHT & SOUND

Sole Advertisement
Agents :
MESSRS. AUBREY
W. HAMMOND & CO.
Fulwood House,
High Holborn,
LONDON, W.C.1.

Telephone :
Chancery 7850, 7080.

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

VOLUME 4, No. 15

CONTENTS

AUTUMN 1935

	page		page
COVER : from DER SCHIMMELREITER, directed by Curt Oetel and Hans Deppe (Film Society)		REVIEWS	
TAKING STOCK	103	FILMS OF THE QUARTER	120
NOTES OF THE QUARTER	105	CONTINENTAL FILMS	124
CLASSICAL BALLET AND THE CINEMA		DOCUMENTARY FILMS	125
Alexandra Danilova	107	PUBLICATIONS	140
GHOST HUNTING WITH A CINÉ CAMERA		WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING	143
Harry Price	109	NEWS FROM BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES ...	144
WAR AND CHILD OPINION Frederick Evans	111	TECHNICAL AND TRADE ... H. D. Waley	
ORGANISING A BRANCH F. Heming Vaughan	114	WESTERN-ELECTRIC-KODAK HIGH SPEED	
ACTING FOR THE FILMS IN 1912		MOTION PICTURE TIMING SYSTEM	148
Charles Graham	118	EVOLUTION OF CINEMATOGRAPHY ...	150
		NEW APPARATUS	152

FILMS AND THE SCHOOL : A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS.

TOWARDS AN IDEAL, by F. Wilkinson ; MAKING THE PAST LIVE, by Mary Field ; FILMS IN A RURAL
SCHOOL, by A. S. C. Lambon ; EXAMINING EDUCATIONAL FILMS, by H. E. Dance ; WORLD EDUCATION
CONFERENCE. Pages 129-139.

TAKING STOCK

THE publication of the Second Annual Report* of the British Film Institute provides the opportunity not only to examine the practical results of the Institute's work in the light of the purpose for which it stands, but to see that work in its proper perspective, in relation to present tendencies towards the development of the cinema for education and entertainment alike.

Two recent events will have an increasing contribution to make to the effective development of the educational film. The first is the passing of the Finance Act, which introduces free trade in educational films throughout the Empire and between those countries which were parties to the Convention signed at Geneva in October, 1933 ; the second, the establishment of

the National Film Library. By facilitating international exchange, the market for educational films is at once widened. Countries will no longer have to rely almost entirely on films produced at home ; they may draw on new sources, and films made by world recognised authorities will find a circulation beyond the boundaries of the countries in which they were made. This proposal to remove customs duties on educational films has always received the active support of the British Film Institute. The Institute has urged forward the project at meetings and conferences, and now that the legislation has been brought into effect it will continue its work on a practical basis by assisting the Board of Education in certifying such films for exemption from duty. It is early yet to speak of the success of the Institute's venture in setting up its

* Second Annual Report, published by the British Film Institute, September, 1935. 1½d. post free.

National Library, but representations from teachers themselves emphasise how considerably a central source of film supply can help them. There is an immense amount of hard spade work to be done before the Library can function effectively, but this is fully realised, and plans for the development of the Library's services have been formulated with care.

Further encouragement is given to those who wish to see the film used more extensively in the service of education by the sympathetic attitude of the Board of Education towards the aims of the British Film Institute, by the promise of the Parliamentary Secretary that the Institute shall receive any support which the Board can give, and by the decision of the London County Council to undertake an extensive experiment in the use of films for educational purposes.

The Institute is promoting the development of the entertainment film by directing its energies to positive methods whereby the discriminating cinema-going public can be organised and enlarged. Through the setting up of local branches, the Institute is forming a body of public opinion throughout the country in support of good films of every kind. An important development is the decision by the Institute, in consultation with the Film Censorship Consultative Committee, to award Vouchers of Approval to films voluntarily submitted to the Institute for examination. In awarding these Vouchers the Institute will be concerned with the general accuracy, artistic quality and intelligence of the film, and the proposal has received general approval. "Surely, if accuracy can be obtained in the detail of a film," says Sir Cecil Levita, in a letter to the Press, "it is all to the good of the public and the producers of the film."

Much of the work recorded in the Annual Report is, perhaps, unspectacular, but it is work which contributes no less to the general purposes of the Institute. In two years, the Institute has proved its practical utility. Government departments, national organisations, business houses, film companies and studios,

teachers and the general public are using its services repeatedly. The Report records the work which the Institute has done to effect co-operation between teachers and the trade; the planning of a series of history teaching films may be quoted as a single example of what can be done by such collaboration. Teachers have again been brought into contact with those who make the apparatus and films which they use through the Institute's Summer Schools at Scarborough and Loughborough, while an opportunity was given by the Visual Section of the recent Conference at Oxford for delegates from all over the world to pool their experience.

The Film Institute has carried out its work with energy, but the ultimate test of its worth must be the extent to which it meets the needs which its promoters had in mind. The Annual Report provides the proof that the progress which it has made during the last two years has been in full accordance with the objects for which it was established. Moreover, the measure of public support which it is receiving is justifying its work. Its membership is increasing steadily, and a significant feature is the fact that twenty-five Local Education Authorities in this country and fourteen in the Empire are represented besides thirty other Government Departments, educational and social organisations and film companies. In addition, representatives of over one hundred organisations, both official and voluntary, have assisted on the Advisory Council and Panels of the Institute. The task which lies ahead of the Institute is to strengthen itself still further by creating a solid membership which will itself speak for the value of the work which the Institute is doing.

We regret to announce that Lord Tweedsmuir has been obliged to resign his position as a Governor of the British Film Institute on his appointment as Governor-General of Canada. Members of the Institute and of the Advisory Council have associated themselves with the Governors in expressing to Lord Tweedsmuir their appreciation of his work on behalf of the Institute and in wishing him success. Dr. Benjamin Gregory was unanimously elected at the Annual General Meeting to succeed Lord Tweedsmuir as a representative of the general public on the Governing Board of the British Film Institute.

NOTES OF THE QUARTER



A scene from **THE ROBBER SYMPHONY** (Concordia Films)
See Note below

Berlin Builds Television Newsreel House

Germany which is so far ahead in the development of the cinema for educational purposes, seems likely also to take the lead as far as the application of television to the cinema is concerned. We understand that a Television Newsreel House has been planned by the Reich Film Bureau in conjunction with the German Newsreel Companies, and it is hoped that it will be possible to open the theatre before the end of the year. It is stated that by televising news films from a central station, time and expense in transport will be saved.

The apparatus will also allow the audience to be spectators of events which will be specially transmitted to the theatre as they take place.

The Robber Symphony

An experiment in departing from hide-bound convention is as welcome in cinematography as elsewhere. We therefore await with considerable interest the arrival of *The Robber Symphony* which is claimed to be the first really international sound film. Although it will run for two hours there are only about 300 spoken words, the action being interpreted by music and sound. It is described as a 'composed' film in which music

is the 'star.' Its theme is a purely fantastic one about a boy and a piano in the mountains, with robbers following him and gendarmes following the robbers. Whether it will be a 'box-office' success remains to be seen; its real claim to merit seems to be that it completely breaks away from routine methods, and develops a new technique which has its nearest analogy in the Walt Disney creations.

The film has a further interest on account of the associations of the leading people concerned in its production. Friedrich Feher, the composer and director, played a leading role in the silent classic *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, and was prominently associated with Dr. Robert Wiene in the production of that film. In *Hunted People* he introduced for the first time his technique of music and sound instead of dialogue. The chief camera-man is Eugen Schufftan who photographed *Metropolis*, inventor of the famous process which bears his name. Erno Metzner, the art director, is well known for his work on *The White Hell of Pitz Palu*, *Westfront 1918*, and *Kameradschaft*.

Concordia Films of Regent Street, London, who are responsible for this new venture will next produce *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* as a 'composed' film.

Broadcasts to Schools on Films

It has been suggested many times by contributors to SIGHT AND SOUND that training children to appreciate good films is just as important as training their taste in music and the drama. Readers will therefore be interested to learn that a series of talks on films is to be included in the school broadcasts. Over six hundred schools made use of the talks on English and listened to the dramatic readings during 1934-35, and the reports of these schools suggested that the scope of the broadcasts might with advantage be widened to include talks on films and, incidentally, newspapers. Accordingly the English Committee, as an experiment, have arranged a certain number of talks in the programme for 1935-36 which are designed to encourage discrimination between good and bad films, and to foster the critical examination of news in whatever medium it may be presented. The talks, which will be given by Mr. S. P. B. Mais during the Autumn term, deal with newsreels, animal cartoons and historical films. The Committee believe that the subject of English is sufficiently elastic to allow of these innovations, and they think that teachers will cordially welcome talks on the cinema, which is the form of drama most familiar to children to-day.

Awards at Venice

Great Britain does not figure so prominently this year in the results of the Venice Film Competition, which is organised as part of the International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art. Last year it was a British picture which gained the maximum award—the Gold Challenge Cup for the best foreign (*i.e.* non-Italian) film. It goes this year to America

for the M.G.M. film *Anna Karenina*, "starring" Greta Garbo. This country is not, however, entirely unrepresented in the list of awards: *Escape Me Never* won a cup for the best presentation of Italian scenes, and *Sanders of the River* was awarded the City of Venice cup for the best musical film.

The foreign documentary award goes to the Nazi film *The Triumph of Will*. The Volpi cup was awarded to Paula Wessely (Austria) for her work in *Episode*. King Vidor was awarded the director's prize, while the award for the best cartoon went to Walt Disney's *Band Concert*. *Becky Sharp* won the cup for the best colour picture, and *The Informer* gained another cup given by the Authors and Editors Society for the best action picture.

As a biennial event the Venice Exhibition would normally have been held in 1936, but so successful was the Exhibition of 1934 that it was decided to organise another Exhibition this year. There seems to be no falling off of interest in international events of this kind; twelve nations including Great Britain competed, and eighty-four films were shown to some 38,500 spectators.

Zoo's Cinema

"It is a project I should dearly like to see accomplished," said Mr. Julian Huxley referring to the possibility of establishing a permanent theatre in the Gardens for showing nature films. Mr. Huxley, who was appointed secretary of the Zoological Society in April last, is giving attention to the matter. "I feel that it would be a splendid thing," he said, "were the Society able ultimately not only to show films to the public, but also to have an official Zoo cameraman attached to the staff." He also mentioned the interesting possibility of forming under the auspices of the Zoological Society a library of films on the subject.



Greta Garbo in a scene from *ANNA KARENINA* directed by Clarence Brown (M.G.M.)

CLASSICAL BALLET AND THE CINEMA

Alexandra Danilova, the famous Ballerina, suggests in this article which she has written expressly for *Sight and Sound* that the film should be used to preserve the art of the ballet for posterity.

By Alexandra Danilova

THE classical dance, as I have seen it up to now on the screen, always seemed to me rather clumsy and funny, and only recently, having seen some fragments from our ballets at a friend's house,

I suddenly realised that our classical dance might be made "photogenic"—might be made to photograph well on the screen. To be quite frank, it made me feel very happy, for it would be a pity



Danilova and Massine in "La Boutique Fantasque"

Photograph by Sasha

FILMING THE RUSSIAN

by

Alexandra Danilova

BALLET

if such a beautiful art as ours should for ever be cut off from having any place on the screen.

Filming the ballet

So far none of the professional film companies, generally speaking, has occupied itself with the filming of the classical dance. But why should it not figure occasionally as part of an ordinary screen-drama? How romantic it would be if the beginning of a screen-romance took place at a performance of the Russian Ballet, under the influence of Brahms or the romantic music of Tchaikovsky or Rossini! Or why should not the screen hero occasionally seek oblivion in a symphony of that same Brahms or in watching a performance of Stravinsky's "Fire-Bird"?

One gets so tired of the conventional dance-halls, cabarets and restaurants which are endlessly presented by the directors of films. The idea I suggest has probably just not occurred to them. No one has so far thought of filming the Russian Ballet except my friend Captain Pollard, an amateur, experimenting on his own.

The technical difficulties are, of course, considerable, especially those of lighting, and the speed of movement. A film-actor, for instance, is nearly always told to move slowly in front of the camera—to make less rapid and sudden gestures than he would on the ordinary stage. The seizing and recording of rapid movement—without making it appear jerky—is one of the problems that has to be solved.

However, Captain Pollard's results are already so good that on seeing them Col. de Basil at once decided to film gradually all the ballets in the repertoire for preserving the choreography.

Preserving the art of the ballet

The difficulty of preserving the choreography of modern ballets has always been great. It was not so in the old days. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ballets were much more simple than they are now, and usually consisted of various permutations and combinations of well-known steps and movements. These could be easily recorded on paper—and were so recorded by the old ballet-masters. Then came the newer forms of ballet, in which Fokine, Nijinsky and Massine invented new steps and movements entirely out of their own heads—movements, often, of extraordinary complexity that could only be taught to the dancers by the actual demonstration of the inventor at rehearsal. Nijinsky at one time tried to record on paper the choreography of his "Sacre du Printemps," but after covering two hundred sheets

of paper with a notation that neither he himself nor anyone else could understand, he gave up the attempt.

All the newer ballets, therefore, have up to now to be memorised by the dancers and passed on visually. Very many details can become lost if a ballet is not performed for some time. Much is forgotten, and thanks to the film there may now be a precise record over any period of time.*

Hollywood needs a ballet master

Reverting again to the filming of our ballet for its own sake—how beautiful it is! How tiring are the monotonous contracting and expanding circles and stars of chorus-girls, very often dressed in ostrich-feathers. Any observant beholder can tell beforehand that he will now see the same circles or stars, filmed by the director from above or below, again coming together or dispersing, or worse still, maidens with large fans, whom one so often sees in America and who have become so boring. And besides it is all so very hackneyed.

The directors have forgotten all about the true artistic Ballet, for which there is so much room in present-day film art.

The ballet or dance is always the weak spot of every film. I remember *Cleopatra*, where I saw women dancers dressed only in tiger-skins, who crawled about the floor, jumped through burning rings, and a man standing in the middle with a whip—how horrible, what appalling taste! And how frequently one sees these vulgar and monotonous dances. Is there then a shortage of people with the necessary qualifications? No, they simply must be found. Hollywood must find a ballet-master. I was so glad when I heard that Reinhardt had invited Mme. Nijinska for Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Apparently Hollywood has realised at last and has felt the absence of the artistic choreographer. What a wide field for the ballet-master!

It remains for me but to welcome this invitation of so great an artist-choreographer as Mme. Nijinska. It is a step forward and a long step forward for the screen. I hope that in the near future other directors as well will take notice of the weak side of film dances, and will raise them to the required level, by inviting more dancers who know their job.

*Translator's Note :—It is an appalling thought, but a true one, that if the "Lafayette" carrying the de Basil company to America the other day had foundered—or if, less drastically than this, the whole troupe ceased to operate for even quite a few years—the entire repertory of modern ballet would be lost for ever.

GHOST-HUNTING WITH A CINÉ CAMERA

USING THE FILM IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

By Harry Price

Honorary Secretary, University of London Council for Psychical Investigation

I HAVE solved many mysteries in my life, but I have yet to discover why we cannot take good cinematograph pictures in Stygian darkness. It is possible to photograph objects in complete darkness by using infra-red rays and infra-red negative stock, a large aperture lens, and a long exposure; I have taken ciné pictures in a dull light, using infra-red filters and a shorter exposure—but a fully-exposed film of a dark *séance* is still one of my dreams.

Photographing in the darkness

It was many years ago when I made my first attempt to photograph a medium in the dark by means of a ciné camera. The gentleman in question was what was known as a "trumpet medium," *i.e.*, he sat in a room from which all light had been excluded, a metal trumpet was placed in front of him, and the "spirits" were supposed to pick up the trumpet and speak through it. As the medium would not allow us to control his person in any way, we could only take his word that he did not pick up the trumpet himself, and impersonate my "Aunt Mary" or whoever it was who was speaking from the Summerland. It is true that we filled his hands with flour, and equally true that his hands were still full of flour at the end of the *séance*. But certain white marks on the sides of his coat suggested that he had put the flour in his pocket during the *séance*, and had calmly filled his fists with it just before we switched on the lights. I decided that I would attempt to film the proceedings. I must have spent a small fortune in experimenting. Ultra-violet lighting units and

screens; infra-red lamps and filters; "radiant heat" cabinets in which sheets of metal were hotted up to cherry red by electricity; quartz and fluorite lenses; special emulsions and special cameras, etc., were all used in turn, and all eventually discarded. We could *not* take a fully-exposed ciné film in absolute darkness. So I am afraid I do not know to this day whether it was really my "Aunt Mary" (I never heard of her when she was alive) who spoke to me, or whether it was the medium himself who was levitating the trumpet and impersonating the spirits.

Things have improved somewhat since those early days, and with the advent of fast emulsions specially sensitive to the infra-red end of the spectrum, we are nearing our goal. But we are still *just short* of getting what we want, which is, a 16-frames per second, fully-exposed picture taken in complete darkness. Hearing of my dilemma, Messrs. Kodak, Ltd., wrote to me a short time ago and offered to collaborate with me in perfecting a method by means of which we can take a continuous film of everything that happens at a dark *séance*. When that happy day arrives, the fraudulent medium will be put out of business.



On the site of the Brocken experiment, showing magic circle and goat



The Laboratory of the
University of London
Council for Psychical
Research

The ciné camera in the séance-room

I have been speaking of our inability to take motion pictures in the dark; but, in spite of our troubles, we still have a use for our ciné camera in the *séance*-room. A year or so ago I offered a certain "photographic medium" or "spirit photographer" £25 per week, for one hour's work only, the contract to last for twelve months. Of course, there was a condition attached to it, which was that he should produce one genuine spirit photograph before a panel of scientists selected by me, and under my conditions. He refused. One of the ways I intended "controlling" the experiment was to film it, step by step, from the opening of the packet of plates, until the negative, complete with "spirit extra" (or, more probably, without it), and dripping wet, was taken out of the fixing bath. A slow-motion picture would have told us whether the man "switched" the dark slide, tampered with the camera, or added the portrait of my alleged grandmother to the plate by means of a well-known gadget that can be secreted in the palm of the hand.

Filming experiments

Psychical research has so many facets that, for many of our investigations, a motion picture camera is a vital necessity. When I staged the Brocken *Walpurgisnacht* experiment for the Harzer Verkehrsverband during the Goethe Centenary celebrations in 1932, a ciné camera was the first thing I thought of. True, we had to have a "virgin he goat" and a "maiden pure of heart," and other improbabilities, but it was the talkie set-up that was the important thing that evening. And where should we have been during our investigation of Karachi and his gas-pipe Rope Trick, without our ciné camera? And then there was the Fire Walk. Kuda Bux stepped on the fiery trench for something under five seconds; but we, at our leisure, and lolling back in our armchairs, can keep the young Indian on the burning embers all the evening—thanks to the

excellent film which I secured of the "walk."

Mention of the Fire Walk reminds me that we have seen films of other Indian "miracles" projected in our *séance*-room. A year or so ago Dr. E. H. Hunt showed us his wonderful motion pictures of

the fakirs of Southern India. We saw gentlemen sticking swords through their stomachs, piercing their tongues with skewers, and permitting tenpenny nails to be knocked into their heads. We witnessed natives gouging out their eyes with sticks, and other curious diversions. True, I did not want any supper after the show, but I realised that we had witnessed a most interesting demonstration of Eastern "magic"—thanks to the ciné camera, which is supreme from a documentary point of view.

Ciné apparatus needed in the laboratory

No psychical laboratory is complete without a cinematographic equipment. My own contains two cameras and two projectors for 16 mm. and 35 mm. films respectively. For the smaller gauge, I have a Bell and Howell "Filmo" camera and a projector by the same firm. For the larger size I use a Zeiss camera and an "Empire" projector. They are all I need, and fulfil most of my requirements. I shall buy a talkie equipment one of these days, but in the *séance*-room it is the things one sees (or, unfortunately, the things one does not see) that are important. We can record sounds by means of dictaphones and microphones; and our ears—thank heaven!—are still left to us. It is our sight that is denied us in the inky *séance*-room—and I am looking to the infra-red ciné camera as a substitute for our organs of vision.

I invariably take a motion picture camera with me when going to an important "haunt." If I cannot photograph the old family ghost, I can film the house, surroundings, witnesses, etc., and the record makes an important addition to our archives. But I am still hoping that, one of these days, someone will produce a film capable of recording, in the dark, not only the tricks of a fraudulent medium, but also the movements of a genuine phantasm. Then, the lot of the ghost-hunter will indeed be a happy one!

WAR AND CHILD OPINION

By

Frederick Evans

An interesting investigation into the effect of war films on children has recently been conducted in the Central Schools of Erith. Mr. F. Evans, who is Chief Education Officer of the district, describes the experiment and discusses its results in this article.



A scene from FORGOTTEN MEN

(British International Pictures)

THE film can play a great part in investigations into child attitudes to war and to many other questions of human and social importance, for it can produce reactions which are nearer to life than those resulting from the more detached and colder printed word. Accordingly, we may well see in the future the evolution of a series of film tests of intelligence and attitudes, used not to substitute, but to supplement tests based, in the first place, upon the written word.

Purpose of the investigation

Readers of SIGHT AND SOUND may therefore be interested in an investigation recently carried out in the Erith Central Schools into the effect which war films have upon existing child opinion. The purpose of the investigation was to see whether films of actual conditions in the Great War which, during the war years, had been used, in a sense, as propaganda films to encourage the effort to victory, would produce in children born subsequently to the Armistice an attitude favourable to the idea of war. Would what was propaganda in 1917 be still propaganda to the new generation which had been taught to regard the collective system as the desirable and some day normal method of conducting world affairs?

Contemporary films were obtained from the War Office depository and shown to approximately four hundred children. The films included the Battle of the Somme, Operations at Es Solt in the Near East, and also some of naval and air force

activities. They took about two hours to display and, apart from the original captions, were shown without comment.

Cheers from the children

The immediate response could have been mistaken by superficial observers as evidence of the warlike opinions of the children, for they cheered the charge of the British soldiers as they "went over the top" in the blood bath of the Somme, whilst the admirals, generals and airmen all came in for their share of approbation. Limping "walking wounded" were often greeted with laughter, and this the pressmen who were present mistook apparently for lack of feeling and sympathy. Laughter, of course, is frequently the safety valve for emotion other than humour; with the more primitive types and early ages it is often the commonest reaction to what is merely unusual.

Another factor was that when the children were looking at the films the film attitude was most in evidence. Their cheers, as the infantry went "over the top," did not imply, as the investigation later shows, that they wished to find themselves in reality in the same situation nor that they wished to take part in killing and in being killed. For children to cheer a tall ship is not to imply that they wish her guns used in the destruction of a neighbouring people. The admirals, the generals, the action of war in films, have to children the same interest values as a Lindbergh, a Jack Hobbs, a Marconi or a cup final.



The first British motor ambulance at the front in Belgium meets with a slight mishap



French Attack near Guise

From films in Mr. Bert Bernard's collection.

Two questionnaires

This view was clearly brought out in the answers which the children gave to two questionnaires, one set almost immediately after the viewing of the films, and the other a few days later. In neither case was there any discussion of the queries or subject matter by the teachers.

In Questionnaire I* the questions and answers can be consolidated as follows:—

Question 1.—“What do you think of War?”

For	...	...	...	1
Against	...	...	...	381
Indefinite	...	...	...	1

Question 2.—“Would you like to see another coming?”

Yes	...	...	...	1
No	...	...	...	382
Indefinite	...	...	...	0

Question 3.—“What do you think ought to be done?”

The main types of replies were as follows:—

Disarmament, etc.	...	...	123
League of Nations	...	...	122
Arbitration, etc.	...	...	85
Friendship and peace	...	...	54

Question 4.—“If England went to War with another country, what would you do if you were grown up?”

Would render assistance (Girls nursing and/or munitions)	...	...	309
Indefinite replies	...	...	124
Negative replies	...	...	32

Of these about 200 children spoke against unquestioning co-operation. Many affirmative

* This was headed by the caption “You have seen films and pictures which were actually taken during the Great War of 1914-1918. If you remember what you saw in these pictures and what you thought about them, you will be able to answer these questions.”

replies added comments like—“but, with the League of Nations war ought to become unnecessary.”

Questionnaire II resulted in replies as follows:—

Question 1.—“Here are a number of adjectives, some of which describe war and some do not. Cross those out which do not.”

The words which were not crossed out scored as follows:—*Horrible* (380), *dreadful* (362), *wicked* (354), *savage* (333), *foolish* (285), *useless* (280); then came *heroic* (182), *thrilling* (59), *glorious* (9) *wise* (9), *splendid* (4). The anti-war words scored heavily against the pro-war words. *Heroic* can be regarded as neutral, as there was not evident the opinion that war should be conducted in order to give opportunities for heroism.

Question 2.—“Can you think of a good reason for going to War?”

Affirmative Replies	...	...	165
Negative Replies	...	...	211

The main reasons of affirmative type gave *defence* (76), *to stop aggressor* (23), *to increase employment in munitions* (20) and *conquest* (17). There was evidence that the causes of war in history were invoked to find replies to this question.

Question 3.—“What do you think you will remember best of all the things you saw of the films and pictures of war that you have seen?”

The main types of replies were as follows:—

Dead, wounded, horrors, etc.	...	...	175
“Going over the top”	...	...	63
Ambulance work	...	...	59
British and Germans helping one another	...	...	57
Cheerfulness and bravery of all...	...	...	48
Dead animals and horses	...	...	40
The guns and bombs	...	...	59

The horror of war, even as put over mildly in these propaganda films, was clearly the main



German soldiers sending a note by pigeon post



"Somewhere in France"

Reproduced by courtesy of Mr. P. Hudson Braithwaite.

reaction, whilst the humanitarian evidences seem also to have come in for a very remarkable proportion of the interest.

Question 4.—"What could be done to keep war from ever happening again?"

This question is similar to No. 3 in Questionnaire I, and the delayed query gave, generally, similar reactions of opinion. *Chief types of answers:—*

League of Nations	...	...	151
Disarmament	...	...	148
Friendship and peace	...	...	83
Arbitration	...	...	58

In this case the League of Nations came out even more strongly than in the previous questionnaire, when it scored 122, and this fact is evidence of the deeply-rooted character of the idea of the League as a result of the teaching in the schools. The extent of the references to disarmament is interesting in view of Erith's association with munition making. Only four references were made in each questionnaire to religious means of achieving world peace.

Conclusions

The general conclusion is that the opinion of post-war British children as to the undesirability of war is sound, and that there is growing amongst them the belief in collective methods of keeping the peace. For the first time in the history of teaching the children are separating in their minds the panoply of war and its entertainment values from the realities of actual warfare. This could not be said of children in 1914, for whom we have not, unfortunately, a "control" for this investigation. One can only argue on general impressions of opinion in the schools in those days, but it can be safely concluded from the replies analysed above, that remarkable progress has been made in the development of a "world-society" point of view

in our schools. It is sincerely to be hoped that the work of British teachers will to the same intensity be repeated in all the countries of the world, and that the idea of a co-operative solution of the problems of an inter-dependent world will rise triumphantly above the many narrow nationalist preoccupations of to-day. In the work of promoting international understanding, the film is an instrument of supreme importance and the sight and sound of other peoples, if sympathetically and accurately presented, may yet prove the unbreakable link that binds them together. "Nation shall speak peace unto nation."

FILMS FOR THE PROMOTION OF PEACE

The fact that 10 million of our fellow citizens have given unmistakable evidence of their desire for Peace through the National Declaration, and that there are many Amateur Ciné Societies anxious to tackle subjects worthy of their enthusiasm, has inspired the formation of Pax Films, a voluntary organisation for the production of "Films for the Promotion of Peace."

The Society came into being as the result of an informal meeting of The International Friendship League held at 150, Southampton Row, on June 5th, at which representatives of several organisations emphasised the urgent need of forming a body for the exploitation of the film in the cause of world peace.

A Committee representative of many aspects of the Peace and Ciné worlds has been elected with Mr. Kenneth Oliver as Chairman.

On the evening of June 17th there was a gathering at the Brondesbury Ciné Club to see an excellent and varied programme, drawn from several sources for the occasion. At the conclusion it was generally agreed that here was a practical and inspiring object lesson, not only in its frank recognition of difficulties, but because of the gratifying measure of success shown to be attendant upon properly directed effort and real enthusiasm.

The Committee earnestly invites the co-operation of all interested readers.—LIONEL HAMILTON, *Honorary Secretary*, PAX FILMS, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

ORGANISING A BRANCH

By F. Heming Vaughan

AN essential part of the work of the British Film Institute is the establishment of local branches throughout the country. Such branches are necessary not only to make the Institute known, but also to bring to the Institute the contacts which the provinces must supply if the Institute is to function for the nation. It will necessitate generous grants from central funds, but no money could be more legitimately or advantageously spent.

In giving, by editorial request, some account of the methods followed in Merseyside in organising our Branch, I do not wish to suggest that ours is the only way to proceed. The work is new, and every district will have its own problems. But it is thought that a simple statement of what we have done may be of use to others.

Merseyside makes a beginning

Our starting point was the publication of the report *The Film in National Life*. That report and a lecture on it I heard in Oxford in the summer of 1933 by one of its authors, R. S. Lambert, opened my eyes to the significance of the film and the imperative need for the community to share in its development. I returned to Liverpool determined to organise local support for the recommendation that a National Film Institute be set up in Great Britain. A little investigation quickly revealed a genuine interest in the project. The Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr. H. J. W. Hetherington, was the first to respond. With the help of a small group, a circular letter was drawn up and sent out to representative people and to all educational and cultural societies in our area, inviting them to a conference at the University and an exhibition of educational films at a City cinema. Many hundreds came. Two resolutions were passed unanimously: one, moved by Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., urging the establishment of a National Film Institute; and one, moved by the Head Master of Wallasey Grammar School, Mr. F. Wilkinson, for the setting up of a Merseyside organisation, of persons interested in the film. A provisional committee was appointed. The first work of this Committee was to issue a leaflet under the title *The Film in National Life—A Merseyside Campaign*. The objects were summarised under four heads:

1. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction and so raise the general standard of film exhibition.
2. To organise into an effective body persons who will promise to support local cinemas when they show a good class of film.

3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons as to types of films and apparatus and sources and conditions of supply, production, distribution and exhibition.
4. To co-operate as a local organisation with the National Film Institute.

The subscription was fixed at 2s. 6d. in order to reach as many people as possible. Applications for membership came in at a surprising rate. In

May, 1934, a meeting was held in the hall of the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, when the Merseyside Film Institute Society was duly formed.

From that day our Society has grown in numbers and in influence.

Below is some account of the way we have attempted to carry out the objects set forth in our leaflet.

Monthly Bulletin

It was decided at once to issue a Monthly Bulletin for the double purpose of keeping in touch with our members and of organising support for local cinemas when they showed a good class of film. This latter object we attempted through our list of film selections. Members complained that they frequently missed a good film because they did not believe the trade advertisements or the indiscriminate press notices. We examined the monthly programme of the leading cinemas and gave our selections. It won immediate approval. Many joined, and many continue to join simply to receive this guidance. The selected films are classified into:—A. *Recommended—a high standard*. B. *Good of their kind*. C. *Of interest to some*. D. *Shorts*. The rest is silence.

Private film shows

The constantly expressed desire of many of our members to see certain exceptional films not likely to be shown in ordinary cinemas led us to organise our first Film Show. The film chosen was *Don Quixote*, and it was so successful that we have continued the policy as a regular feature of our winter's programme. At first we exhibited in private halls, but the difficulties of improvised projection and other amenities have compelled us to seek the facilities of a cinema. Beginning in a suburban one, through the kindness of an enlightened owner, we then managed to hire a City house on certain Friday nights. The expenses are heavy and the cost of hiring films for one night is a handicap but by well-chosen programmes we have managed to pay our way. The shows are private to members and their friends. This has enabled us in time to



Scenes from two forthcoming films : *Above* : Robert Donat and Jean Parker in René Clair's *THE GHOST GOES WEST*
Below : A scene from H. G. Wells' *THINGS TO COME*, directed by William Cameron Menzies (London Film Productions)

secure permission from the Licensing Bench to show certain films without a certificate. Each show has brought us a big addition to our membership, and the opportunity of seeing films of great merit but limited box-office appeal is greatly appreciated.

The need for study and interested criticism of the film has been met by lectures and discussions supplemented by the showing in our rooms of certain classics reduced to the 16 mm. safety stock.

Amateur films

Among our members are several amateur cine enthusiasts. With their aid we have given special amateur nights when the work of local groups and others further afield have been shown. Some attempts have been promoted to produce a Documentary of Merseyside, but lack of camera-men with the necessary day-light leisure holds up the script. By special invitation of the Dean three of our members made a two-reel record of the famous Liverpool Cathedral Jubilee Service.

The film and the schools

A special Education Sub-Committee has charge of this important work. Besides the usual exhibitions of educational films—sound and silent—to various groups of teachers, the possibility of film exhibition to children in elementary schools has been explored. As many of the schools are without suitable halls or even electricity, the proposal favoured is that of giving shows to groups of schools in some convenient hall or cinema.

Equally significant is the organising of the secondary schools in a Schools Film Institute

Society with special reference to film appreciation. This idea arose out of the success attending several gatherings of senior scholars by invitation at our rooms. Instead of enrolling individual pupils, the schools are joining as schools. The Society is to be managed by a Committee of one from the staff and one senior pupil from each school, with objects identical with the parent society. This new work is only in its formative stage but the possibilities are great.

Small-size safety films

The small-size safety film has been extensively used both in our rooms and for lecture-demonstrations to all kinds of cultured societies. Recently we have been entrusted by the Liverpool Council of Social Service with the use of one of the latest types of sound projectors for giving shows to social service organisations, unemployed clubs, junior occupational centres, boys' and girls' clubs, community groups in the New Housing Estate, and the like. The scheme covers a wide area of usefulness and is arousing much local interest.

Such in outline is how our branch is functioning. I have said nothing of personnel because that is another story. But I may, perhaps, be permitted to say that no society could have been more loyally or ably served than we have been by my colleagues.

The work is fascinating. It touches so many aspects of life. We believe in the ideas embodied in the constitution of the British Film Institute. We are glad to co-operate in the realization of those ideas, and should rejoice to see the uprising of vigorous branches all over the country.

COLOUR AND 'BECKY SHARP'*

WITH admirable insistence, the commercial cinema continues its assault upon the now crumbling barriers which separate it from complete mastery over its material. The artistic irrelevance of sound-reproduction, once heavily urged by the pundits, having conclusively proved itself a myth, we are now faced with experiment in colour on an ambitious and determined scale. In the past we have had our *Black Pirates* and *Glorious Adventures*, but their spasmodic novelty has been equalled by their sterility. *Becky Sharp*'s spiritual descent is traceable less to these prehistoric crudities than to the maturer, more stable development of the Disney Silly Symphony.

It might have been well had the producers studied more closely the affinities between living Technicolour and the Technicolour of the cartoons. The same pointed contrast between the values of the strong and the weak colours appears in both: in Disney's work it is most obvious perhaps in *The Goddess of Spring*, where the flames and monstrous portents of the nether regions put his over-tender portrayal of the upper world to shame. Here too, in *Becky*

* Distributors: Radio Pictures.

Sharp, it is the richer, more virile tones that are successful, while the paler shades seem often to be bereft of all vitality.

The one place where these pallid yellows and blues come into their own is in the attractive overhead shot of *Becky Sharp* weeping on a carpet at her desertion by Rawdon Crawley. Elsewhere they are feeble, the yellows in particular throughout. Miss Miriam Hopkins' blonde hair is a notable sufferer, and one is led to ponder whether the widespread acceptance of Technicolour might not necessitate a radical change in feminine fashions. Auburn beauties, at any rate, must surely open their arms to such an opportunity, for where the yellows lose the reds gain: the soldiers' red coats, for instance, are superbly good. Yet when colour-values are unevenly balanced in reproduction even excellence has its drawbacks: in certain places the dominance of the red has not been sufficiently counteracted, and much of the make-up needs adjustment. What manner of schoolgirls, we may ask, are these flushed and scarlet women to whom we are presented in the opening sequence?

The potentialities of the process in open-air

Miriam Hopkins as BECKY SHARP
Radio Pictures' film directed by
Mamoulian



photography (if they exist) are not demonstrated, and the camera's tendency is to brood reverentially over each setting, as if afraid to move until every item of colour has had time to be fully absorbed by our senses. But in the acknowledged high-spot of the film, the panic at the Duchess of Richmond's Ball, there is a sharp and commendable change of tenor. This special passage is well-cut and full of movement, with heavy shadows setting off effectively the colours of the confused and fleeing masses. For once one feels that the colour-element has lost its hovering uneasiness and become integral to the mood expressed. Single-tone lighting, in a deep red, has been used in some of the shots: although this expedient in practice seems a trifle stagey and artificial, it is well that it should have been tried.

This sequence alone may be said to justify the film, and to vindicate the application of colour to the moving picture. We are not here concerned with the soundness of the present Technicolour process as a commercial proposition, and may admit freely that its mode of procedure, both technical and æsthetic, gives scope for improvement; but it is sufficiently adult in stature, and has made a sufficient advance away from the primitive failings of narrow range, inaccuracy, and uncertain outlines, for us to be able to survey the result critically and appreciatively without having our attention too much diverted by what are in essence trivialities. Where it achieves its ends, it does so very convincingly.

Hazy outlines and poor definition, from one mechanical cause or another, have always been among the chief obstacles to successful colour-representation on the screen. Much has been done to eliminate this difficulty, but there is one aspect of the problem not often taken into account, involving as it does a reconsideration of the methods of ordinary black-and-white photography. It is the question of the occasional background blur which arises when it is necessary, for adequate emphasis, to focus on a comparatively restricted foreground and with a moving background area. In colour-work, at least, and with a moving background the result is apt to be disturbing. Although in *Becky Sharp* it has been largely avoided, it obtrudes itself in a balcony-scene during the Ball. One wonders

whether a satisfactory solution can be found without the ultimate assistance of a thoroughgoing stereoscopic system—the next step in the evolution of the cinema.

A. V.

THE COLOUR BOX (LA BELLE CRÉOLE) Production: G.P.O. Film Unit. Colour hand-painted by Len Lye. Synchronization by Jack Elliot. 292 ft.

The reinforcements of sound and colour have stirred the abstract film to a new, more lively vitality. Hitherto but a silent and bloodless shadow, it now springs forth startlingly real and self-complete: *The Colour Box*—made as an advertisement for the G.P.O.—is in its brief assault upon eye and ear more profoundly effective than a horde of vacuous feature-films.

These pulsating geometrical forms and strange shifting rhythmic configurations inhabit a magnetic world of their own, where they cavort to a *Béguine* tune as well as any of us. There is no valid compulsion, one supposes, which need tie them to Jazz—but it is with something of reluctance that one contemplates the possibility, far off perhaps, of some ambitious innovator's endeavouring to make them gyrate to a Beethoven symphony: itself already fully concrete and in no need of external interpretation.

The principle ultimately to be followed is clear: involving the composition of music and colour-forms side by side, each conceived with an eye to the requirements and the potentialities of the other, and neither overstepping its own limits. In *The Colour Box* the music has preceded the visual expression; but this is music of a sort which *a priori* lends itself very freely to such handling, and Mr. Lye has made the most of it. By variation of colour-tone, shape, and movement of masses against a plain background, manœuvring them to coincide accurately, to the last sprocket-hole, with the progression of the sound-track, he has succeeded in translating not only the rhythm but the pitch and individual feeling of the instruments.

A.V.

ACTING FOR THE FILMS IN 1912

Mr. Graham who took part in some of the Vitagraph and Hepworth productions here describes his experiences in these early films

By Charles Graham, D.S.O., M.C.

I WAS living in rooms in New York with an actor friend of mine when I first came into touch with the Vitagraph Company. My friend was playing in "Milestones"; I was acting with Forbes Robertson in the repertoire of plays with which for three years

but wear straw hats. What's your size?" A young and rather pessimistic fellow then took us off to the makeup room, where a stout gentleman of Italian extraction and redolent of garlic proceeded to make me up with black, white, grey and yellow

till I looked like a black and white wash drawing on a cream tinted background. Panchromatic films were things of the future and healthy colours were taboo.

We were sent to studio number 6 where we were fated to come into a room which had three sides only and no ceiling, shake hands with no less a person than Clara Kimball Young, then fade away to a table at the side, sit down and play part of a hand of cards with two American women, one stout and fair, the other thin and dark.

Mr. Young, the beautiful Clara's husband, was the producer, and if he knew what he was producing I certainly did not. We came into that painted canvas room fifty times if we came into it once, we smiled the same smiles, we frowned the same frowns, we played the same cards and at last the big lights went on and we did it all again while the cameras shot the scene. "Come to-morrow at eleven," we were told, and we went back to the makeup room. Thus we earned our first money on the films, ten dollars apiece—not so bad for about three hours work.

Next morning at eleven we presented ourselves again, but Young was not shooting. We were seen, however, by another producer. Again the same procedure, but this time I drew a dress suit, and Arundel an American navy seaman's uniform. The whole thing reminded me rather of a lucky dip. We spent three very pleasant weeks; we talked to beautiful ladies whom we had till then seen only on the screen; we were photographed going upstairs and going down, in the studio, in the country, in gardens, and on the deck and in the cabin of a fine ocean-going yacht on the Hudson.

And then Nemesis overtook me. The scene was



John Bunny and Flora Finch in PANDORA'S BOX, an early Vitagraph comedy

Reproduced by courtesy of Mr. P. Hudson Braithwaite

he played his farewell tour of the United States and Canada. When we were not actually acting we found time hang a little heavily on our hands, and it was during a moment of boredom that my friend suggested going to the Vitagraph Studios.

Film acting for the first time

We joined a crowd of people amongst whom I recognised a couple of English actors; the rest were Americans. We had not said a word to a soul, and no one had questioned us, when a man in shirt sleeves and with a green shade over his eyes came into the room and scrutinised first one and then another. He picked out one or two and then came to Arundel and myself. "I can use you," said he, and handed each of us a card. My card bore a number and the mystic words "Walking Gent Card Scene." Arundel's card bore the same number and the same words. We learnt that the film would be known by this number till its name was revealed to a waiting public, that we were the "walking-gents" in a card playing scene which was to be shot that morning and that we were to take the card to the wardrobe room.

Here a man chewing a fat cigar took our cards, looked us over, and said, "Your clothes will do,

a struggle for life in the engine room. True to the rehearsal I struggled last up the iron ladder, and just as I reached toward the top with the water nearly up to my neck the man above put his foot on my head and pushed me under the water. Whether he or I was the villain of the piece I did not know, and I have never found out. What the picture was, and whether it was ever released, I cannot say. That was the last of my experience of acting for the films in America.

Acting for the films in England

Odd and chaotic as I found my experiences in America, they were methodical and orderly by comparison with those in England.

I remember meeting a dapper little music hall comedian very famous in his day, and it led to his asking me to play with him in a film to be produced at the studios at Twickenham, which to the best of my recollection were run by the Hepworths. Alma Taylor was then the bright particular star of that studio, but she took no part in our film. For myself, I was some kind of a gentleman crook. I made love to the heroine, and I burgled a safe, and I left finger marks in all the right places in the most approved style, but why and wherefore I know not.

In New York I used to watch John Bunny playing with Flora Finch, as painfully thin as Bunny was grotesquely fat, and they, just as I, were drilled and told to register this and that, and to hold it, and to make it snappy. And duly, like good little automata, they did as they were bid.

The more I saw of these methods the more I was amazed that they could produce anything as coherent as were even those early films. The fact remains however that it was possible to produce thousands of films which were accepted by the public, and in which the majority of the cast probably knew as little as I did of the plot. The actor's part was thus reduced to the level of a puppet. But this cannot be true of a man like George Arliss, who exhibits logical growth of characterization in some, at all events, of the roles he plays; and that most thorough actor, Edmund Gwenn, lives in his part. The film gains every time when the art of the actor is recognised. I am sure that it is more like that now than in 1912, and I am sure too that it was like that in Charlie Chaplin's film *The Woman of Paris*, whose every part was a gem. It is good to think that acting as an art, and not as a system of mechanical registering of emotion to command, has come out of the slough in which it had at one time appeared to be its fate to be submerged.

Now, to what has that improvement been due? The years 1910-11 saw the birth of the star system and the beginning of the death of picture making on mass production lines. Stardom put the public in the "driver's seat," and from then on, the movie kings had to give what the public wanted. Stardom brought its evils, but on the whole it brought more benefits than drawbacks in its train. Mary Pickford was an actress and Charlie Chaplin a mummer born and bred. They knew what they were doing,



A scene from *TILLY THE TOMBOY* featuring Alma Taylor and Chrissie White, a Hepworth comedy

By courtesy of Mr. P. Hudson Braithwaite

and would not be suppressed. Soon the public were demanding something better than the mere appearance of a star, and so the level of film productions rose as the stars felt the urge of self-preservation.

Film versus stage acting

To me, the film never will replace the art of the stage.

The very insubstantiality of the figures on the screen has made for a wider, a more lasting and intimate appeal to the emotion of the audience than the art of the actor has achieved. Close ups of enormously magnified faces have permitted a change in mood to be grasped more clearly by the boy in the back of the cinema gallery than the actor can hope to achieve by his facial expression on the most impressionable young woman in the front row of the stalls in the theatre. It is not only because on the screen he can appear in fifty thousand cinemas at a time that Ronald Colman has his thousand devotees where Lewis Waller had one. It is because Ronald Colman's every eyelash can be seen, a full foot or more in length upon the screen, that his audience knows him as Waller's never knew their idol. They are so much larger than life these heroes of the screen they cannot fail to impress themselves on lesser mortals, and yet though it be held as heresy, I still would have you believe that it is more satisfying to the actor's soul to be the substance than the shadow.

In acting on the stage it is not the actor alone who has a part to play. The audience have theirs, and one thing the shadow people of the screen can never know is the joy that comes from feeling the audience begin to play their part and—catching fire in turn from them—to give just that little bit better show that night than before.



FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By
Alistair
Cooke

From *MUSIC IN THE
BLOOD*, directed by
Erich Waschneck
(G.B.D.)

MEDIOCRITY from Hollywood to Elstree, from Berlin to Moscow, has been humping itself this summer to assure us of the unfunniest, the most banal, autumn you are ever likely to spend in a movie house. If editors did not demand more explicit accounts than a sigh, it would be best to wave the whole quarter away by writing under the above heading simply "Where?" As it is, I must ease myself into criticism by gradual stages. Sitting through twenty-nine of the thirty films I have seen for the sake of this chronicle, I could gain a little comfort only from invoking John Anderson's classic comment on *Fallen Angels*: "It was so quiet you could have heard a play drop."

It has almost looked as if every country in films had sold out to the Warner Brothers. There are four outposts in vacuity—*Sweet Music* in California, *Music in the Blood* in Berlin, *Me and Marlborough* in Hertfordshire, *Jazz Comedy* in Moscow. An autopsy on the last must wait a season, for its deadness is, I feel, no accident. For the others, *Me and Marlborough* is the most depressing; I suppose English stage humour was at its best—I mean humour in the theatre, the improvised sort, not the planned repartee of Congreve—in the late Edwardian days, when every other popular song had the spirit and local relevance of "I'm Colonel Coldfeet of the Coldstream Guards." Nowadays we seem so resourceless that even English music-hall audiences will sit uncomplainingly through a rendering of "Stars Fell on Alabama," though they know not where Alabama is and why it was that stars fell there. Cicely Courtneidge belongs to that ripe era, and this film is pitched at the hearty stridency of our old music-halls. But this humour (it looks more like an exaggerated form of good-

humour) is terrible in cinema. Its cockiness, its witless heartiness, its ominous preparations of every joke, the thundering hammer-stroke of the joke itself, the flurry of winks (in close-up) to assure the audience that that was the place to laugh—these may have been exhilarating in the old Empire, but not in the new. Tom Walls has an inkling that he can drop his voice to better effect on the screen and lose nothing. But he is the only one. And Hitchcock is our only director who can reclaim our own confidence in our humour by making it visual and slight. Or it may have been that French and American humour was waiting for the cinema, that only in film can dry and fleeting irony come into its own as an exhibition. Even then, it remains an exhibition only for the natives. Prejean and Dearly have to be seen in France, and Fields and Raymond Walburn in America. Their studied inconsequence, the casual dropping of the best lines in half-mumbled sentences that the audience is meant hardly to get—these are qualities that need their corollary in the audience, that ask for an audience which shall know the characters well enough to laugh hugely at the idea that they are meant to miss the joke. And we, alas, know "American humour" in terms of its least important mechanical trick—the wise-crack; so we dutifully applaud lines that pass in silence in Illinois and remain glumly unperceptive before odd remarks that leave America rejoicing in the aisles.

I chose these four films specifically for this apparent digression. *Sweet Music* is bad because it lives up to the artificial stimulant of wisecracks, it picturises for a foreign country an America that is regrettably familiar to us, but which is, to the gentleman from Maryland who saw the film with

Walt Disney's latest Silly Symphony,
WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN?
 (United Artists)



me, "something like China to me." And, similarly, *Me and Marlborough* offers an American audience every justification of its belief that the English are the most humourless and facetious of peoples, gives no glimpse of genuine Cockney humour, though the whole piece is a spate of its artificial substitute. *Music in the Blood* offers to an English or French audience confirmation of the suspicion that German humour consists in alternating bursts of temper with holding hands. These three films have this disheartening thing in common—they are ambassadors of reassurance, confirming foreign audiences in their own complacency, offering practically nothing which is the unique gift of the country that made them. *Music in the Blood* will, I am afraid, go the rounds of the repertory theatres and be marvelled at as a thing of grace and cultivated charm, which, in fact, might have been made by anyone with a reasonable taste in music and an appreciation of a painful stage in adolescent amours. Almost any level-headed cutter from Hollywood or Elstree could have redeemed it from going on record as the worst edited film of the quarter.

Alexandrov's *Jazz Comedy* may be considered trivially as part of the bourgeois drift that is amusing the newspapers nowadays—as another item in a

movement that has restored the Czarist military titles to the Soviet and commissioned an Austrian princess as Soviet dress adviser. But it is a symptom of something more distressing in Russian films—the break between two groups, the old group who want to go ahead and make their own, and presumably revolutionary, films, and the Moscow groups who take the diplomatic hand-outs and will fall into line with a discreet political policy. *Jazz Comedy* is remarkable only because so crude an anecdote could have been made in Russia and thought hilarious. It could have been made in Hollywood in 1917, but nowhere else at that time. If the Soviet is still to keep the respect of a sensible cinema public, it must forget about *Deserter* and run off for itself some day *The Road to Life*, *Chapayev*, and *Jazz Comedy*, see these films not as embodiments of some "sound-technique" or other, but look upon them for once humbly as—let's say just films ;

and then, having observed the blundering and chaotic gift of tempo, having had their eyes blinded by the sheer primary inability to control intensity of light, having lamented the consistently slovenly continuity and the badness of the recording, let us hope they will then close their studios, look around for a little humility, do some work on frequency-recording, resist the impulse to make a film called 'Father,' or 'The Way of Ambition,' call one for a change 'A Grocer's Boy,' or 'Fun



Charlie Chaplin in *MODERN TIMES*
 (United Artists)



Jean Muir as Helena and Ross Alexander as Demetrius in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, directed by Reinhardt (Warner Bros.)

with a Samovar.' Then may we see the beginning of the Russian sound-film.

These four films most aptly summarise two trends that have worried this chronicler, and that in lesser ways have been illustrated in many another film. But there must be still readers who want films to see. If you are as intractable as all that, here, then, are the bunch of mediocrities:

There is *The Black Room* with Karloff acting for once in a film that again shows Katherine de Mille as possibly the greatest unused discovery since Katherine Hepburn. Roy William Neill deserves a bouquet for the unforced but quite traditional suggestions of Gothic romance that hangs about the castle and its ghoulish twins.

There is *China Seas*, which has one sequence—a

deceive you into thinking you are seeing a passable film concerned with refined issues. A pity that Lilian Hellman should have been wasted so, or that so glucose a piece should have put the scene designer to the pains he has endured to produce some fine cinema sets.

There is, less mediocre than the rest, a painstaking and indulgent picturisation of the life of Barnum, *The Mighty Barnum*, directed with great honesty and fidelity to the autobiography, by Walter Lang.

There is *Abyssinia*, by Mittelholzer, a flight from Switzerland into mid-Ethiopia, perhaps by the time these notes appear a sad memory. It is admirable as an achievement of travel simply and much has been left in that a detached editor, less proud of the blood and sweat that secured these pictures,

would have ruthlessly cut. But the opening aerial section is as excellent wide-aperture photography as I have seen. And the film, considered as a political document rather than as an arid "documentary," is almost a political duty to know.

There is no more to say.



Titania with the Indian boy and the fairies. *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* (Warner Bros.)



From ABYSSINIA, the film referred to by Mr. Cooke on the opposite page (A.B.F.D)

"THE MARCH OF TIME"

BY the time this note appears, *The March of Time* will be about to burst into at least the London theatres. These observations are made on the specimen *March of Time* which its sponsors in this country, Radio Pictures, showed a week or two ago to the press. They are spontaneous and unconsidered, and must be revised when it is possible to see the thing regularly as a monthly feature. Meanwhile, the impact of this news-reel on this country suggests some astonishing and some ominous consequences.

It is odd that the most realistic documentary group in England, the G.P.O. unit, our only sentient turners of history into news, should suddenly, by the production of a handful of fine American journalists, be left stranded; should suddenly appear as conscientious dramatisers of platitudes, should turn into a group of gentle academes roaming England with a camera and finding only what the already completed scenario had arranged for them to find. This is so monstrous a reaction that I am sure I am wrong. But my first vivid impression after seeing *The March of Time* is that men whose first and acute interest is the growth of fact into news have at every turn triumphed over men whose first interest is the technique of cinema. The men who have something to say in any art are not necessarily its professional practitioners—though *Time* assured itself of cameramen who have been at their trade for most of the past twenty years. It is to be hoped that documentary groups will not feel obliged, after the popular success of *The March of Time*, to search out that to ridicule either in the material

or its technical method. These tracings of the origins of events, this view of news as conceived incident rather than as columns of accidents, is elaborate enough. But the aloofness, intelligence and apt irony, which for the past ten years have made *Time* so pathetically superior to any other newspaper or magazine in English, here make *The March of Time*, the first adult news-reel. Admirers should be reminded that such results are not the happy picturisation of a flip sense of news. *Time* has a research staff of such size and thoroughness that when vouching for its foreign correspondence one is constantly, hopelessly, reminded that the Soviet correspondent of our own immortal *Times* writes from outside the Soviet, from that Ruritanian hotbed of rumour—Riga.

When this news-reel was first mooted *Time* spent endless money and trouble and two years of experiment before the thing seemed a feasible proposition. As in their weekly collection of foreign news, the filmed *Time* is admirable by the amount of concealed research, chasing, cabling, digested history its slickness represents. But let us pray that no British company will now have the bright thought of imitating it before they have assured themselves of a staff, a vast library, years of experiment, a news service in most cities of the world, and that unique combination of shock tactics and fundamental taste which is, I suspect, *Time's* secret. Let all other film companies give pause before the horrific example of *The Daily Express*, which, having once read *Time*, now reads like the office boy's idea of *Time*. ALISTAIR COOKE.



From *DOOD WATER*, directed by Gerard Rutten (Film Society.)

SOME CONTINENTAL FILMS OF THE QUARTER

THE assumption of the continental film to a place of honour is due perhaps less to any obvious intrinsic superiority than to a pleasing strangeness of tongue and atmosphere. It is a pity that as the opportunity for seeing these importations increases, so critical appreciation tends to crystallize into vogue. In continental films as elsewhere the emphasis is very often upon the surface values; and judgment allows itself too easily to be misled by the persuasive voice of fashion.

One of the most revealing of recent films was the Dutch *Dood Water*, which dealt with the reclamation of the Zuyder Zee. The sharp separation between the documentary prologue and the main story marked also a significant distinction between what this type of film does well and what it does badly. The opening made admirable use of all the technical resources at its command, and the excellent sung commentary was perfectly in tune with the visual

illustration of mechanical progress through the years: the whole moved briskly and with assurance—if it seemed long and a trifle complicated, that may well have been due to one's ignorance of the language. But in the story proper this romantic impressionism gave way to a dragging sentimentality. The over-dark interiors, the irritating blurred photography of love-scenes, the stilted presentation of peasant-life in general, contrasted oddly with the efficient and exhilarating handling of the inanimate and the abstract. The sombre peasant has been greatly over done; and it would be well if film-producers were sometimes to forget the word "lyrical," which too often is an excuse for stereotyped shots and superficiality of content.

Another peasant-film—billed somewhat misleadingly as a "Friesian Legend"—was *Der Schimmelreiter* ("The Rider on the White Horse.") It was difficult to know precisely how to take this. Largely it is what one had grown to expect: beautiful if occasionally rather standardised exterior photography; attractive slices of local colour, not always directly related to the action; and a plot whose course proceeds amblingly, by various ways and byways, to a solemn conclusion. In these surroundings the vague mystical note of the Rider, bringing calamity and death in his train, strikes a faint discord.

It appears to intrude without sufficient justification, except a purely pictorial one. If it is there at all, one feels, it should be there to some purpose; but instead it has been inserted as one among a number of other secondary incidents, strolled round in a grave and stately manner, and otherwise left alone. The accumulation of episodes, treated frequently at some length but rarely with profundity, and leading to a climax without adequate finality, is in any case a method bound to be dissatisfying to those who wish for more than a momentary titillation of eye and mind.

Of quite a different style, in conformity with the temper of the Curzon audience, is the French-speaking UFA film *Barcarole*, whose scene is laid in pre-War Venice at carnival-time. Here the story is the thing, and the formula sophistication with a sob. Despite the inherent artificiality of the theme, which can never be fully overcome, a good deal has been accomplished in the creation of atmosphere. The mass-effects and noises of carnival are set forward with conviction, and there are some nicely-cut shots of a carnival-boat sailing the streets. One sequence stands out head and shoulders above the rest, that inside the empty café, contrasted so strongly with the gaiety of the crowds outside. The passage of the action is restricted to a space of twenty-four hours, and in this regard at least *Barcarole* might be imitated with advantage.

From Moscow comes *St. Petersburg*, technically in several respects a highly competent production, but in subject-matter and development mediocre.

Some of the lighting and photography are noticeably good, and there is a lingering over detail and a characteristic insistence on cutting-values. The device of relating picture to sound by opposition or indirect suggestion is illustrated by the frequent use of statues in the foreground—such as that of a figure blowing a trumpet, while an actual performer is heard behind; or of a galloping horse and rider on a pedestal, while the sound-track records the noise of confused running to an affray. But the results of this display of technical prowess are scattered and ineffectual. The film as a whole has little real solidity: its movements are feeble, its climaxes crude. The propagandist element lacks both purpose and subtlety, and the nineteenth-century setting is infinitely less convincing than the customary Russian treatment of present-day conditions. What virtue remains is ruthlessly massacred by the sub-titles.

This question of sub-titles needs long and deep consideration. They meet us at every turn: sub-titles misplaced, sub-titles mis-spelt, sub-titles inept, sub-titles abominable. They throw out the composition of shots, ruin their photographic quality, and break up their continuity—sometimes they seem to swamp the picture completely. Their absence in the prologue to *Dood Water* was nothing but gain.

The Czecho-Slovakian *Volga in Flames*, closely following the novel by Pushkin, was shown here uncaptioned, but with dubbed English dialogue. This experiment, too, was hardly a success. The

lack of correspondence between words and mouth-movements can be ignored; but the vast unsuitability of Western tone and accent is another matter. Cossacks and Cockneys have little in common; and at moments of tension the formal intonation of the studio reduces the action to bathos. Choice of language also provides its problems. Wherever, in fact, the dialogue ceased for a space to be predominant, and the film was left to rely upon its original sounds, the story was lifted bodily to a higher sphere.

For some abstruse reason the period had been brought up-to-date, and telephones, electric lights and machine-guns were much in evidence. Nevertheless, the story retained its shape, and despite a pointless love-interest and an evidently miscast hero, was able to be often grim, exciting and dramatic. Through all its handicaps, the direction showed sufficient power for one to have wished that one might have seen the film and judged it before alien hands had been allowed to tamper with its vitals.

A. VESSELO.

Directors and distributors of the films reviewed above are as follows:—

Der Schimmelreiter (Curt Oetel and Hans Deppe) and *Dood Water* (Gerard Rutten), The Film Society, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1. *Barcarole* (Gerhard Lamprecht), Gaumont British Distributors, Film House, Wardour Street, London, W.1. *St. Petersburg* (G. Rochal and V. Streoeva), Reunion Films, Ltd., 91, Regent Street, London, W.1. *Volga in Flames* (V. Tourjansky), Wardour Films, Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, London, W.1.

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

NEW DOCUMENTARY FILMS

B.B.C. : THE VOICE OF BRITAIN (British)

Production : G.P.O. Film Unit.

Direction : John Grierson, Stuart Legg.

Length : 5,035 feet.

Distributors : A.B.F.D.

It is perhaps fitting that the cinema, one of the newest and most intimate of popular influences, should have undertaken a conspectus of the field covered by wireless, the newest and possibly most intimate of all. The task is a considerable one, but the G.P.O. Film Unit, within the limits which they have set themselves, have accomplished it with an evident measure of success. Treating the theme on purely impressionistic lines, they have produced a film which on the face of it is agreeable, entertaining, and neatly trimmed to shape.

Morning begins the picture; and the midnight sky, with Big Ben striking the hour in the distance, carries it finally to a close. Between these points

are gathered the contents not of a single cycle but of many, scattered at large over the whole domain of broadcasting. Well-known microphone personalities are briefly displayed in action, rehearsals are shown taking place in the studio, an outside broadcast of the Boat-Race is included, and glimpses are given of listeners attending to the Voice heard in the background. In as far as one is concerned with the question of variety of incident and superficial comprehensiveness, it is difficult to find ground for complaint.

But one cannot escape the ultimate conviction that something is missing. There are decided obscurities of exposition; and solidity, or any profound internal coherence, are not easily to be discovered. The obvious answer, that all this is intentional, that a direct sequence of events or an explanation of procedure has been deliberately avoided, is not sufficient. A documentary film dealing with such a topic might clearly have gone so much deeper than has here been attempted,



THIS WAS ENGLAND, directed by
Mary Field (G.B.I.)

formalism of the amateur. Even more formal, if in quite a different way, is the shot of a child's head posed gracefully against the sky—symbolic of an attitude.

Considered as passing entertainment, *The Voice of Britain* is in the main acceptable; but viewed in any more exacting light, it is a trifle disappointing.

THE FACE OF BRITAIN (British)

Production : Gaumont-British
Instructional, Limited.

Direction : Paul Rotha.

Photography : George Pocknall.

Length : 1,730 feet.

PROGRESS (British)

Production : Gaumont-British
Instructional, Limited

Length : 1,720 feet.

that one wonders to find so few of the implications satisfactorily established. If less had been taken in hand, more might have been achieved. Here and there it seems almost as if the necessity for popular appeal were the chief restrictive factor—a disturbing suggestion.

The disembodied voice, so beloved by our documentary leaders of thought, here naturally comes into its own. Even in this context, however, it is not always completely apposite, and tends to be obtrusive. It is a pity, too, that where it is theoretically in place the idea should now and then have run away from the execution. In a characteristic sequence, a lady talker in the *Children's Hour*, delivering an oration whose course we are induced to follow without too close attention, is dissolved slowly forwards and backwards into shots of children in different environments listening. Her voice is continued, but we observe little or no variation either in distance or in tone—a trap into which the American film (as *vide* certain parallel passages in *Wings in the Dark*) rarely falls.

In these surroundings the human element of necessity plays a large part—a larger and more direct part than is usual in this type of film; and it is noticeable that whereas Clapham and Dwyer, or Bernard Shaw, or Henry Hall, are able to create their own peculiar intimacy of atmosphere, such a passage as the domestic sequence towards the end, which relies primarily upon the director, carries less than a surface conviction: it has a formal quality, akin not to the precise, pointed formalism of the professional but to the diffuse, irrelevant

THIS WAS ENGLAND (British)

Production : Gaumont-British Instructional, Limited

Direction : Miss Mary Field.

Photography : George Pocknall, Frank Bundy.

Length : 1,897 feet.

These three films follow *Shipyard* in G-B Instructional's "Face of Britain" series: which is to be completed by *Citizens of the Future* (Donald Taylor) and *Great Cargoes* (Paul Rotha).

Like *The Song of Ceylon*, though not adhering too closely to its pattern, *The Face of Britain* is in four distinct sections: comprising both a retrospect and, in a sense, a forecast. The first part shows us Britain before the coming of the Industrial Revolution—a land of green fields, idyllically portrayed, and untroubled peasantry. The second, the *Coming of Power*, envisages graphically the disturbance arising from sudden, disorganised change on a great scale: the springing-up of factory and slum, the defiling of sky and countryside with smoke, the stress and turmoil attendant on the development of Industry. The third introduces a new and now happier note, heralding the arrival of electricity; and the last part points a finger forward to a better and a higher social culture, with swifter, cleaner methods of transport, a compact and simply-designed architecture to replace the muddle of the past, and a re-discovery of the forgotten countryside.

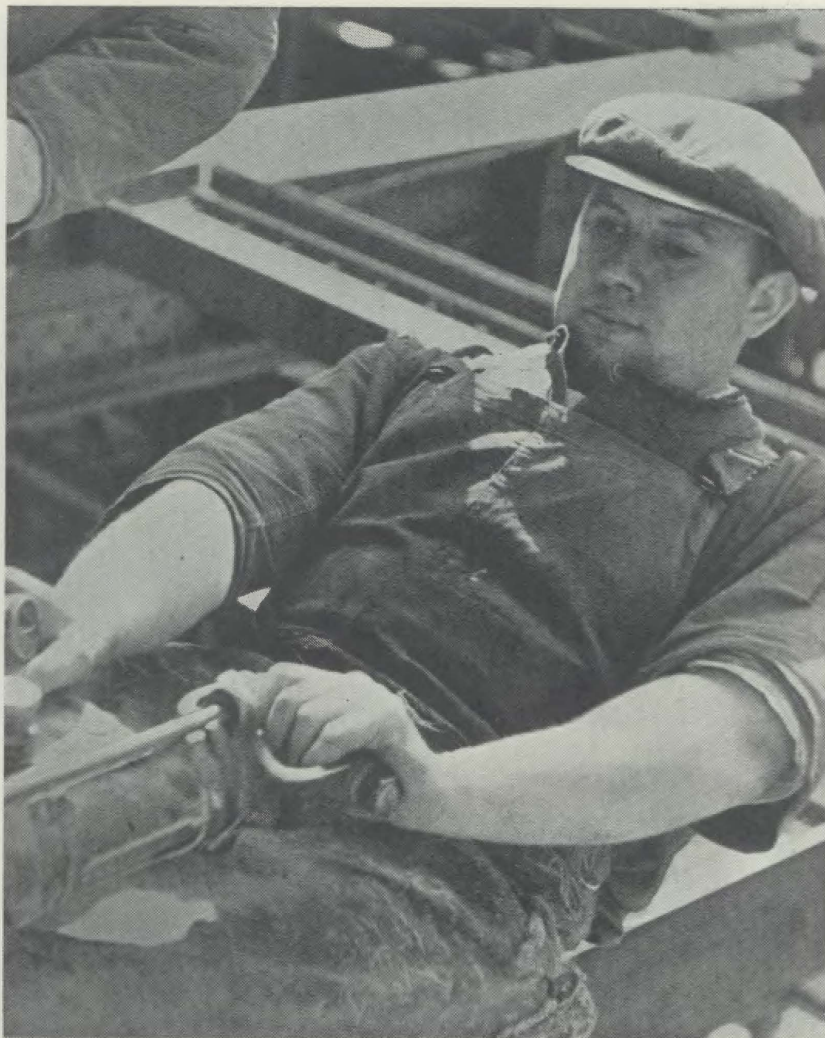
From Rotha's *FACE OF BRITAIN* (G.B.I.)

It is natural enough that part two should be the best and part four the weakest, for optimistic solutions of our present difficulties tend to be unconvincing. The opening, too, is of more validity as a romantic contrast than as an assertion of fact. But Rotha's feeling for atmosphere is strong; and where his case is clear he does not fail to make its statement impressive and dramatic. By a transparent symbolism, with rhythmic cutting of sound and picture, he bears us with him, at a faster and faster pace, from the first hint of upheaval to the final disquieting accomplishment. In the climax to the second part he presents us with rapid shots of men shovelling coal into an unseen furnace, alternating briefly with shots of mean streets, as if the coal were being shovelled in to feed the growth of the slums.

The relatively greater straightforwardness of theme and treatment makes the film (with the possible exception of the last part) a more satisfactory whole than *Shipyard*, which seemed to lose itself half-way in a maze of hammerings and clangings. Here, too, there are hammerings and other background noises, but they fit themselves more appropriately to the action; and the tone is set for each part by the opening shots and the accompanying music. As in *Shipyard*, the photography is often revealing in its quality: the shot of an overhead truck travelling along inside a large shed, with light and shadow excellently distributed, remains in the mind.

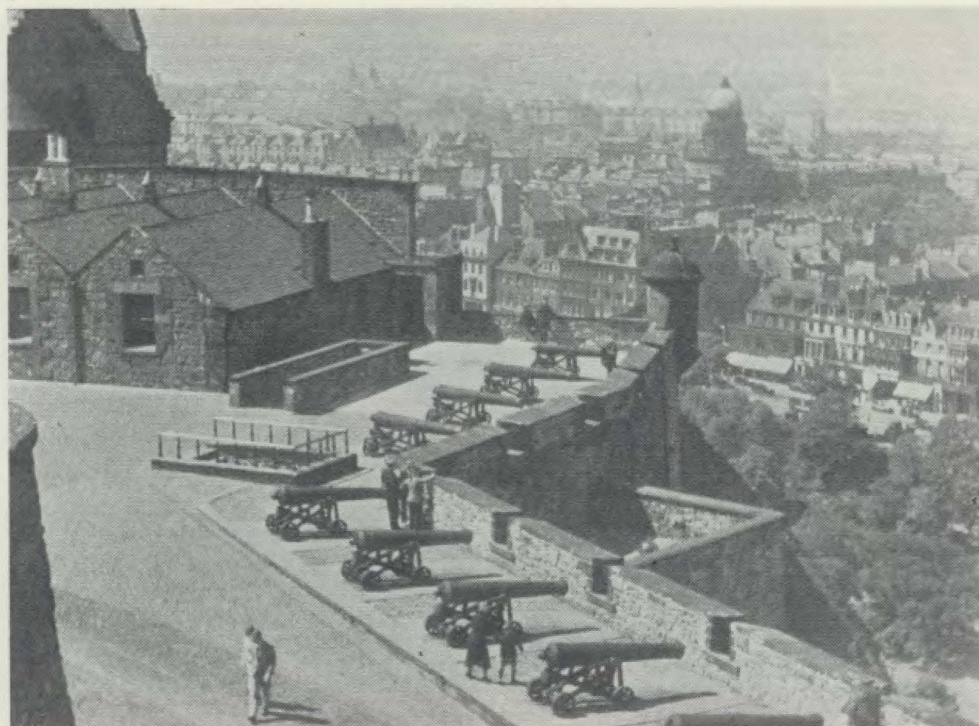
Commentary is always a problem, and the fact of its absence here in the first few feet makes its subsequent abrupt entry a trifle disconcerting. In *Progress* a partial endeavour has been made to meet the need for continuous explanation by the introduction of a small family, who act as a sort of Greek Chorus throughout. Unfortunately, they never succeed in being more than lay figures—so much so, that it is not always easy to recognise their identity. The film deals generally first of all with advance in the air during the last twenty-five years, covering the War by means of the rather overworked superimposition, then proceeds shortly to advance in sea travel, and ends with "the greatest wonder of all," wireless. It has a vague air of being a belated celebration of the Jubilee; and the moral it points is distinctly dubious.

This was *England* is less haphazard in content, and in spirit has a rather more obvious affinity with



The Face of Britain, though the conclusions arrived at are different. It is concerned to demonstrate the continuity of tradition in Suffolk, where the methods of the Stone Age go side by side with the most modern agricultural devices. The main commentary is supplied by a Suffolk voice, and Suffolk characters actually in the film add their own quota also to the argument: the old farm-hand who describes and illustrates the process of hand-sowing is particularly refreshing, taking to the camera as he does with a great deal more ease than many professional actors. The various strata of tradition are treated in historical sequence, each by itself, interlinked by short sub-titles indicating the period to which they severally belong. The encroaching sea-tides begin and end the film, and are used incidentally to symbolise that other tide, "the ebb-tide of prosperity."

The impression left at the finish is just a little hazy; and the more complicated operations, such as thatching, are too cursorily shown, if one wished really to know much about them. Miss Field's collection of metaphorical close-ups evidences chiefly a sentimental longing for the past, as against Rotha's hopes for the future—and that seems all. But perhaps no more is intended.



THE KEY TO SCOTLAND,
directed by Marion Grierson,
and reviewed below
(Strand Films)

THE KEY TO SCOTLAND (British). A Strand Film.

Direction : Miss Marion Grierson.

Musical Accompaniment: Ursula Greville and Leighton Lucas.

Length : 1,220 feet.

THE HEART OF AN EMPIRE (British). A Strand Film.

Production : Marion Grierson.

Director : Alex Shaw.

Musical Accompaniment : 43rd Light Infantry Band, conducted by D. G. Plater.

Length : 750 feet.

The representation on the screen, in adequate perspective and in a short space, of the life and individual characteristics of a great capital city, is an undertaking whose difficulties, in proportion to its value if properly carried out, are immense. In tackling Edinburgh, Miss Grierson has wisely chosen a line of approach—the historical—which to a large extent carries its own continuity. This method, in turn, however, raises its own specific problems.

The Key to Scotland brings us on the whole surprisingly close to its subject. Taking as its focussing-point the Castle Rock, which dominates the town, it leads us back *via* a school lesson to the early wars; and from here, ascending the centuries through the Reformation to the Union and after, passes eventually to the expansion of Edinburgh, in comparatively modern times, across the hills and—ultimately—to the sea. The city's industries, its streets and traffic, and its great

importance as a centre of learning, are all sketched out; and the film ends with the arrival of the Royal Commissioner in state at Holyrood Palace.

The special problems of the method employed are plain from the start. The few reconstructed scenes from the past, superimposed and otherwise, are a little reminiscent of an Aldershot Tattoo; while the historical and discursive commentary (appropriately in Scottish tones) is occasionally inclined to distract rather than instruct. But perhaps the chief difficulty is simply the vastness of the ground covered, which makes a single viewing insufficient. In the last sequence, the continuity seems to double back upon itself, for the return to the rock causes us to believe the film practically at an end.

Nevertheless, in a field so crowded with obstacles, Miss Grierson may be congratulated on having accomplished her course with so little serious damage. Though our tour may be somewhat hurried, we do feel genuinely that we have made acquaintance with Edinburgh. The introduction of Scottish national airs in the musical accompaniment helps to create atmosphere; and there is a pleasing vitality about the film, as it proceeds and takes in one by one the circumstances of the present day.

The Heart of an Empire is not, as one might imagine, London, but rather the heart of London itself—St. James's Park and its environs. This is an extremely short film, barely lasting eight-and-a-half minutes, and in such a compass it makes no pretence to an exhaustive survey. From the Park it moves outwards in a confined circle, picking on public buildings and institutions of importance; then returning, roams pleasantly about its centre, the commentary here assuming an historical aspect, as in the previous film; and, again somewhat after the manner of the previous film, it comes to a close with the pageantry of the King's birthday at the Palace.

One could wish for more, and for a more elaborate treatment: the taste is just enough to whet one's appetite. But the evident mass of material in so concentrated a geographical area makes one more conscious than ever of the difficulties in the way of a complete documentation of London.

FILMS AND THE SCHOOL

A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS

TOWARDS AN IDEAL

EQUIPPING OUR SCHOOLS WITH PROJECTORS

By F. Wilkinson

Mr. F. Wilkinson, Headmaster of the Regent Street Polytechnic School, and Editor of the Education Section of *Sight and Sound*, here states his belief that most teachers are now convinced of the value of the film as a supplementary aid in the classroom. The next step must be the installation of projectors in all our schools, and Mr. Wilkinson suggests "The Film in the School" as a useful guide book for those who are anxious to use the film in their work.

THIS Educational Section began just a year ago. In the four issues which have appeared an endeavour has been made to cover all the important aspects of the use of the film in education, and the editorial policy has been to invite contributions from practical teachers and experts whose experience in the actual use of film in teaching entitled them to pass on their knowledge to their colleagues in need of advice. In other words, this Section is a journal run by teachers for teachers, and if it has served no other purpose it has, at any rate, helped to convince the bulk of the profession "that it is in the highest degree desirable to introduce the film into the school."

Need for a projector in every school

Having completed this stage of its work it is felt that the next objective should be the recognition of a projector as an essential item of school apparatus. Although the number of teachers still indifferent to the use of the film in education may now be small, there are multitudes of converts to the film who have still never used a film owing to their not possessing a projector. To-day the schools which possess a projector are mainly those where funds are obtainable from other than official sources, and where educational authorities are purchasing projectors they are often so grudging that the resultant number of film lessons per child is scanty and the introduction of films therefore not worth the trouble entailed. Again many authorities refuse to purchase a projector outright and demand part payment by the schools themselves, which are obliged to have recourse to running concerts, bazaars and other functions at a profit or inviting donations from kindly patrons. For an essential article of school equipment to be contingent for its provision upon such chance and irrational sources of income is as silly as the dependence of hospitals upon the collection of silver paper. When we are so

often complacently informed that whereas in England only 1,000 schools possess projectors in comparison with the 9,000 projectors of France and the soon-to-be 20,000 in Germany, we are apt to doubt the efficiency and foresight of our much-vaunted administrative system. The objection on the part of the authorities, moreover, does not seem to be primarily one of expense, but rather a suspicion that teachers will not make such use of the film as will be commensurate with the cost. If such a suspicion still lurks in the minds of officials, the recent amazing display at Oxford of the creative work of our schools ought to have exploded it for ever.

The film in the school

Where doubt still prevails I should like to draw attention to a book recently published at the price of 3s. 6d. by Messrs. Christophers—*The Film in the School*, edited by Mr. J. A. Lauwerys of the Institute of Education, University of London. After reading this book it will be apparent that, although certain problems remain unsolved, no longer are there any grounds for the old contention that the film is not an essential medium in education. But until most schools possess a projector of their own the whole matter is held up, and we waste our energies in despair, whilst the French, Germans, Italians, Russians and Americans are free to progress.

Everyone who has studied the question of the film in schools will congratulate Mr. Lauwerys on his choice of contributors and his own competent survey of the matter as it stands to-day. The purpose of the book is to give advice as practical and as detailed as possible to those who would like to use films in their work. There is an entire absence of "hot-air." The facts are all of them real and they are set down simply and concisely, as if one sensible balanced person were speaking to another. Collectively the seven chapters with the appendices provide the profession with its first complete authoritative guide.

Manipulating a projector

Of the most direct utility are the chapters on the choice and use of a projector, for which Mr. H. D. Waley, Technical Editor of *SIGHT AND SOUND*, is responsible. Readers of this journal already know Mr. Waley for his regular articles in its columns, and are enormously indebted to him

for his lucid expositions of the mechanics of film projection. By reading this book teachers can estimate the relative values of the various projectors on the market and the most unmechanical will be able to secure satisfactory projection. We cannot be too urgently reminded that this is a mechanical age and that our education is incomplete until we understand the mechanical processes placed at our service, and whether we mean to work our own projectors or not we ought to be familiar with their manipulation and their potentiality. Furthermore, whatever the conditions, nothing short of perfect projection should be the criterion, and with this end in view Mr. Waley's advice is invaluable.

Producing educational films

When we first became converts to the film in education we remember what mistakes we made through expecting from cinematography all sorts of achievements which now we know it cannot fulfil. But even with the truer knowledge which experience has brought we still labour under many delusions. Therefore it was a wise act on Mr. Lauwerys's part to invite Mary Field, the most competent producer of educational films in this country, to write upon "The Scope and Production of Educational Films." Here we learn the means by which teachers *can get the films they want*. The system is a complicated one and must always be so, for film is a corporative and not an individualistic art. There is also between the initial idea and the resultant screen picture a mass of technical processes, hitherto extremely difficult to subdue to the human will. However that may be, ways and means of securing what teachers want are emerging, and Miss Field finds the solution of the problem in the Panels of the British Film Institute.

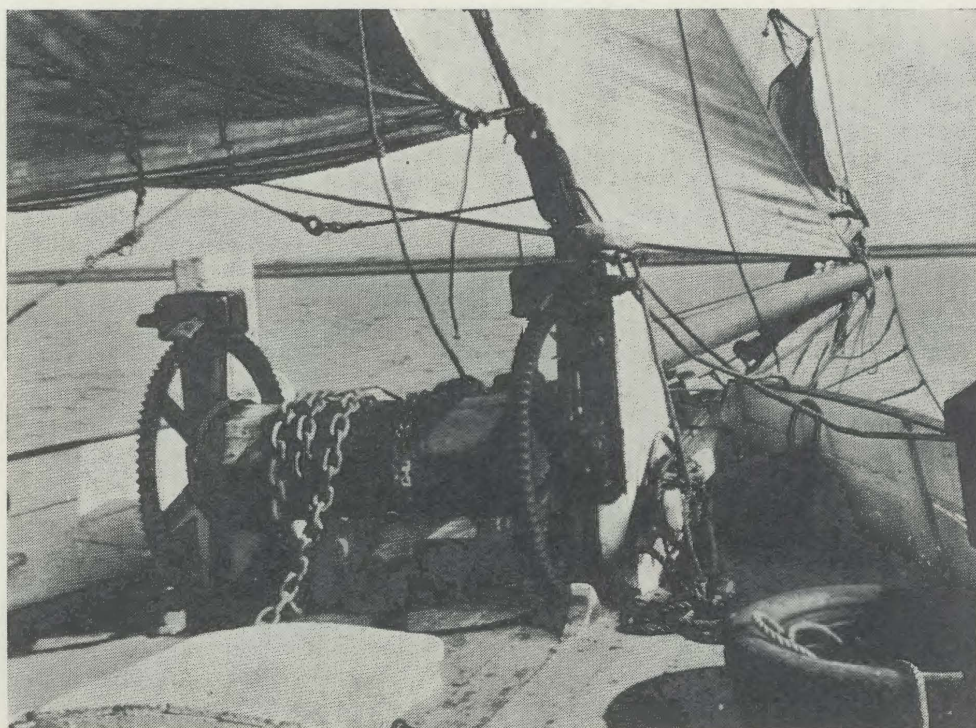
In them a practice has evolved whereby subject experts, teachers, producers and technicians meet in order that they may attain that integration of facts and exposition which the instructional film must have, if it is to be of service to the discriminating teacher.

Classroom practice

Mr. Fairgrieve, Reader in Education at the Institute of Education, University of London, and President of the Geographical Association, is well known as an advocate of the film in education. His contribution is a short treatise on class room practice and the working principles which he has deduced. Mr. Fairgrieve's virtue is his ability to be stimulating, but he has two unfortunate imperfections. He is a geographer, and his examples are therefore mainly selected from the teaching of a subject which responds more easily to the film than any other, and he has an arbitrary prejudice against sound. This prejudice is inspired, I surmise, by a fear that the film, unless it is restricted, will militate against the influence of the teacher and will tend to foster what is the worst element of teaching, namely, direct instruction, thus infusing our children with the passivity of the herd. Mr. Fairgrieve has already partially dealt with this problem of silent and sound films in this Supplement. It is an important matter which needs ventilation and general agreement by arbitration. Both Mr. Lauwerys and Miss Field deal with the problem in their articles and hold more liberal views than Mr. Fairgrieve. It is proposed to devote a special article to this subject in our next issue, but meanwhile Mr. Fairgrieve should be studied in this book, for his assertions are all based on real evidence and deserve our attention.

Mass demonstrations

The chapter on mass demonstration, describing the St. Pancras Experiment in showing films to school children in the public cinema is of less value than the other chapters. Captain Griffith, Headmaster of King Street School, London, himself admits that the scheme is a stop-gap until sufficient projectors are provided in the schools. To my mind the sooner projectors are forthcoming the better,



A new documentary film produced by Steuart Films: **VANISHING SAILS**

so that the necessity for such a scheme may quickly disappear. Children's matinees and family performances we must have, but these should be intrinsically entertainment occasions, and although teachers can be of considerable use in an advisory capacity for such performances, they should keep in the background; otherwise these performances will be suspect and audiences will keep away. Schools will need occasionally to attend performances at public cinemas to see special films, and standards of taste may be improved thereby, but such schemes are of minor importance when viewed in relation with the showing of films in the classroom where the opportunities for intimate discussion and for the development of individual appreciation are immediate and infinite. Mass conditions are the teacher's worst enemy and an established system of mass film demonstrations seems to me to be playing into that enemy's hands.

Film-making at school

It was to be expected that Ronald Gow would write on "Film-Making at School," and his article is compact with suggestions for running a school film society, for recording incidents in the life of the school and also for making films as an item of creative activity. Mr. Gow describes the work of the production group he organised at Altrincham Grammar School and although this is now old history with him, Mr. Gow has still few rivals in this field.

To my mind the obvious opportunity for the amateur lies in documentary work. He is largely wasting his time when he turns to filming plays. The same statement applies to the school, and I contend that Mr. Gow was only being educative when he was co-operating with his pupils in making a film of the River Dart. His attempts at filming plays were no doubt a pleasurable occupation, but all the results of educational value which he

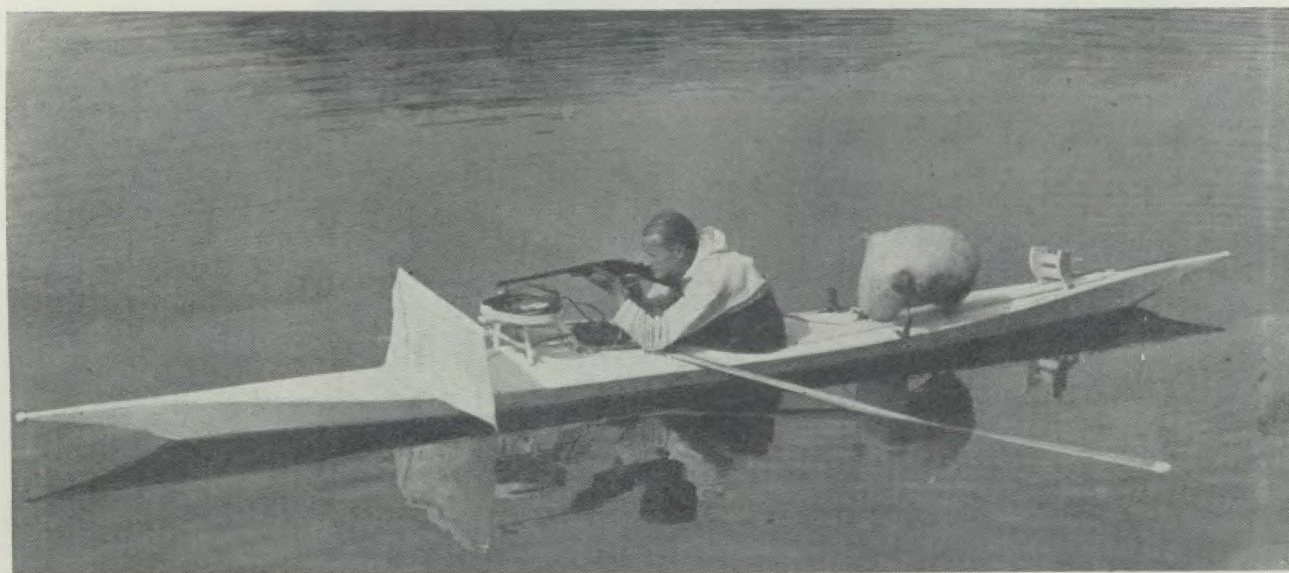
catalogues could have been more effectively achieved by leaving well alone in the hands of the school dramatic society. However, Mr. Gow belongs to that glad coterie of enthusiasts who refuse to recognise that there can be either faults or limitations in the object of their passion and may he and his like continue to abound and flourish in our midst.

In his opening chapter Mr. Lauwerys devotes twenty pages to the consideration of the place of the film in education. Mr. Lauwerys is not out to convert but simply to give the plain facts of the case, leaving them to make their own plea. No one can deny that, in the words of the preface, the book "will succeed in its aim of getting this powerful aid more widely used," and its message by implication is none the less significant—*the occasion has now arrived for us in England to follow the rest of the world and set about the task of fitting each of our schools with a projector.*

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Western Electric "All-In" Hiring Service

The latest addition to the sound films available through the Western Electric "All-In" Hiring Service is *Northern Lights*, the record of the British Expedition to Greenland, sent to explore the possibilities of an Arctic air route between England and Canada. The film opens with the sailing of the expedition in the "Quest," under the leadership of Gino Watkins, in July, 1930, and follows the investigations and explorations of the various groups of the expedition round the coasts of Greenland and inland to the ice-cap where for five months Augustine Courtauld was imprisoned before being rescued only just in time. The film ends with some scenes of Watkins in a kayak accompanied by an account of how he probably met his death while kayaking two years after the expedition portrayed in *Northern Lights*. The film, which lasts thirty-five minutes, should appeal to teachers and organisers of lectures in other institutions. A class reader, entitled *With Watkins in Greenland*, has been specially written for use with the film, by Mr. G. J. Cons, M.A., lecturer in geography to the Goldsmiths' College, and a member of the Advisory Council and Geography Committee of the British Film Institute.



Gino Watkins in his Kayak. A scene from NORTHERN LIGHTS

(Western Electric Hiring Service)

MAKING THE PAST LIVE

INACCURACY IN HISTORICAL FILMS

The aim of an historical film should be to interpret the past with truth and honesty, says Miss Field in discussing how far inaccuracy can be justified.

By Mary Field, M.A. (Lond.)

FIRST of all, what is historical accuracy? Truth compels us to admit that it is, in general, a thing with which the average intelligent person, the scholar, teacher or the student, has little to do. Historical accuracy is for the research worker, who, by delving after details into original sources, can tell us, without question, what a certain person did in a certain place at a certain time. Sometimes, more rarely, such a research scholar can tell us what an historical character thought on a given date. But this work, so laboriously detailed, is too limited in scope to be of much interest or value, except for the specialist.

How far can the historian be accurate?

Beyond this accurate research work, comes history as we usually know it, a series of generalisations and deductions, based on the detailed facts that have been excavated, arranged and marshalled. But can generalisations and deductions, however brilliant, be *accurate*? Surely it is contrary to their nature to be so. Just they may be, honest they may be, but *accurate*—no. The most carefully documented history of the wool trade, for instance, may give a graphic and generally truthful description of conditions of manufacture in one certain year,

and yet is almost certain to be inaccurate for the wool trade as carried on at the particular time in one particular clothier's yard, where practice was either advanced or retrograde. The historian's description would be a just one giving an honest picture of general conditions, but it would not be utterly and completely accurate.

Indeed, to achieve such perfect accuracy, the historian would have to abandon much of his real historical quality of seizing upon what is of vital importance in the period or subject which he is considering and revert to the position of a mere recorder of uncorrelated facts. And, as a writer, he can guard against the charge of inaccuracy by the use of words. He can say "as far as we know" or "practically all" or "deviations from this practice were so few as to be of no importance." The written and the spoken word give the author who does not wish to dogmatise an easy loophole for escape; but the film offers no such easy retreat for the expert who is not completely certain.

What the film can do

Nothing lays bare ignorance more quickly than the film. A short time ago a diagram film on physiology was being made, and a section of the scenario had to be abandoned because the knowledge of the physiologists could not meet the demands of the medium in which they were working. Science could only say "in a few hours," but the moving film must say "now."

By its nature, therefore, the film is so exact that an historical film can give an accurate picture of an isolated event or of a particular



Cecil B. de Mille's spectacular film **THE CRUSADES**, with Loretta Young as Berengaria, and Henry Wilcoxon as Richard I. (Paramount)

practice only. It can portray woollen workers in one particular clothier's yard on one particular day, but it cannot give an entirely accurate picture of the wool trade from 1730 to 1780 because practice varied so much in different districts and even in different yards. But, if a film cannot often be perfectly accurate, for films as limited in scope as the one suggested above would not be of much use, that is no reason why they should not be faithful and honest. Like the ordinary history text-book, which all know is full of allowable inaccurate generalisations, the film can aim at giving a truthful impression of the subject with which it deals. Inaccuracy is, I think, forgivable in an historical film, but untruthfulness is inexcusable.

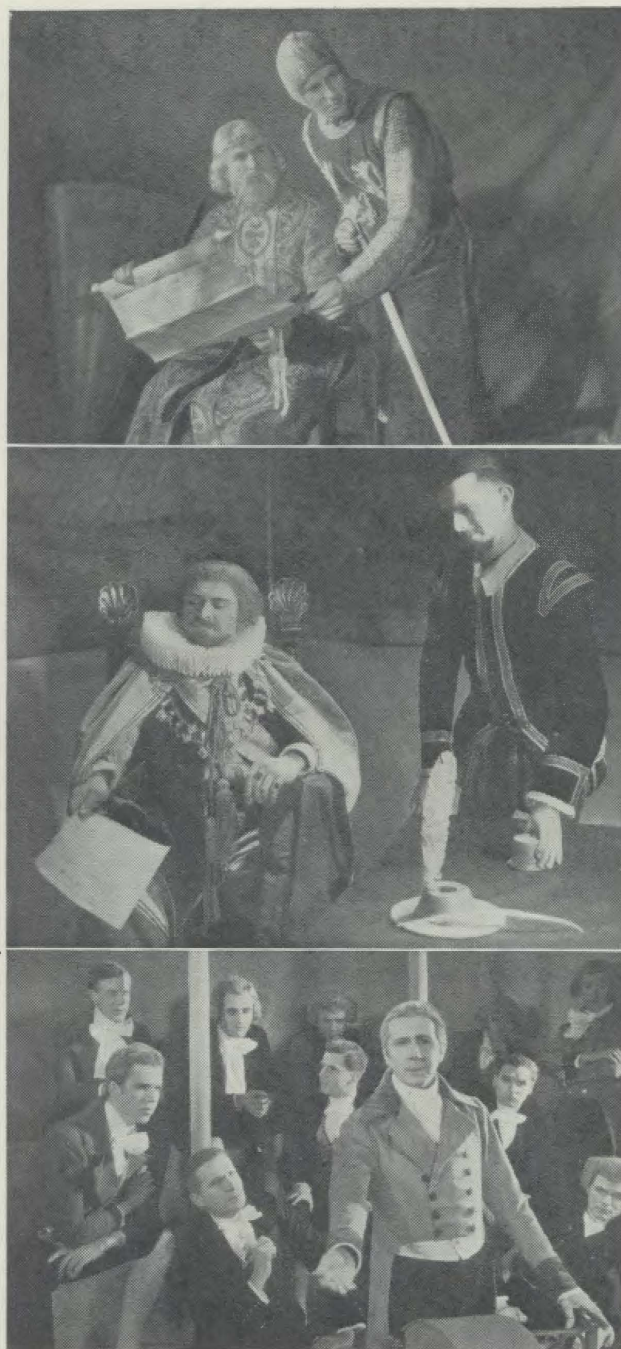
Interpreting the past

To interpret the past honestly and truthfully is not easy. Many fine actors are incapable of portraying the minds and characters of earlier times. An outstanding example of an actress who is incurably modern may be found in that delightful star, Loretta Young. I am second to no one in my admiration for Miss Young, when she is well cast, and her performance in *Zoo in Budapest* is still one of my most delightful memories. But in the nineteenth century, the eighteenth century and the twelfth century she is entirely lost, and her work, though gallant, is hopelessly out of date. Another admirable actor who stamps every costume he wears as unmistakably "U.S.A. post war period" is Douglas Fairbanks, Junr. Whoever casts either of these two stars, or any of the others who are twentieth century personified, as historical characters is guilty of grave historical inaccuracy and untruthfulness. The star system is, of course, much to blame for this unsuitable casting. There is a story that Alexander Korda, when he was busy with his projected film on Queen Elizabeth, was asked what he thought the last Tudor sovereign was like in appearance. "I don't know what she *did* look like," he replied, "but I think she *will* look very like Miss ——" (mentioning the lady he hoped would take the part). Anything less alike than the two women could hardly be imagined, nor could one envisage such a triumph of make-up as would have made the impersonation a truthful one. There is no excuse for this bad casting, for some actors are particularly gifted in representing men and women of earlier times. Leslie Howard, Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Robert Donat are three who have the gift of getting under the skin of a character, and of portraying the thought and attitude of mind which alone can recreate the past with truth.

Bad scenario writing is also responsible for making films hopelessly inaccurate, although much time and money have been spent on getting details of costume and architecture correct. What language to use in an historical film is always a problem, for the language of past centuries, both in pronunciation and phraseology, sounds odd to modern ears, while up-to-the-moment slang is definitely out of place. Simple modern speech without any expressions to date it is definitely inaccurate, but gives a

truthful idea that people spoke the ordinary language of their time. Modern slang is wrong because it suggests too much the ideas and machines of a modern age. "Take a letter to Mark Anthony, Rome" says a character in a film; and we listen for the click of the typewriter.

Bad direction is a very frequent cause of inaccuracy in historical films. To direct a film to show Henry VIII as a vulgarian is historically wrong. In public and private life, Henry was a product of the Renaissance, and though the manners of the court at that time may seem unrefined to us nowadays, they marked a high point of refinement



Scenes from *THE FLAG* a historical film directed by Miss Field, the author of this article

for the time. Henry, we must remember, was able to compete in magnificence and courtliness at the Field of the Cloth of Gold with two rich and cultured European sovereigns. He was no boor to his contemporaries, and to represent him as such is an example of unforgivable inaccuracy.

Truth and honesty, the essentials

Too much accuracy will kill a film, make the actors wooden, enchain the director, limit the scenario writer. The aim of an historical film should be to interpret the past with truth and honesty, and then it doesn't matter if the hats are five years out of date, or if the make-up is modelled on a portrait of ten years before the action. One may write with truth of an historical production that "the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive." But where can we find studio personnel with historical sense and production experience?

FILM SUMMER SCHOOL

THE first Summer School to be arranged in this country for the instruction of teachers in the use and possibilities of classroom films was opened by the General Manager of the British Film Institute. The Institute, in co-operation with the Educational Handwork Association, planned an interesting course which was held at Scarborough from 5th-10th August.

The opening lecture was given by Mr. F. Heming Vaughan, Chairman of the Merseyside Branch of the British Film Institute. Taking the wider view of education as concerned with the wise use of leisure and with standards of taste and judgment, he proceeded to give some idea of the problems that confront those who seek to make the film a worthy and creative influence in the life of the nation. "At present," he said, "the film is in bondage to the cinema." In Great Britain about eighteen million pounds is paid annually for admission to the cinemas. Thus the reason for this bondage, he suggested, "lies in the money-making possibilities of the film." The great subjects of sex, war, crime, and religion were used by film production studios regardless of their true significance. He then referred to the influence of the film upon youth, and continued: "A voluntary trade 'film censorship' in this country stops the worst outrages, but its influence is negative. It can prevent the worst, but it cannot encourage the best. To meet this larger and more positive need the British Film Institute has been established and should receive the support of every organisation concerned for the welfare of the young." He went on to explain some of the work of the Institute. He mentioned the publication of its Monthly Film Bulletin, which gives an independent criticism of current films and classifies them according to their suitability for different types of audience, and he described also how the work of the Institute links itself with the schools. He felt strongly that the schools must provide film appreciation just as



Ronald Colman in an historical rôle : CLIVE OF INDIA
directed by Boleslavski (United Artists)

they provided music and drama appreciation. "It is by tackling the cinema at the junior audience end, and making them rebels against rubbish, that we shall be fashioning the most effective instrument for raising film standards."

Some sixty students attended the School. A course on technique and manipulation of film projectors was conducted by Mr. H. D. Waley, Technical Editor of SIGHT AND SOUND. Thanks to the generosity of almost every firm which markets sub-standard projectors for schools in lending apparatus, the students were themselves able to examine and manipulate the machines. A course on school and amateur film production was conducted by Mr. R. Gow, director of a number of educational films. The third course on the use of the film in school was given by Mr. J. A. Lauwerys, lecturer in Methods of Science, University of London, and Mr. W. H. George, of "William Rhodes" School, Chesterfield. It included practical demonstrations with classes of school children. A lecture and demonstration on the use of background films with large audiences of children was given by Mr. G. D. Griffith, Organiser of the St. Pancras Experiment in mass demonstrations.

In the afternoons and evenings, lectures were given which were attended by several hundred students drawn from the various courses organised at Scarborough by the Educational Handwork Association. These lectures included "The Production of an Educational Film," by Miss Mary Field, "The Film in Education," by Mr. G. T. Hankin, H.M.I., and "Films and Physical Education," by Miss R. M. Dewey, H.M.I.

The Scarborough Education Committee lent the Friarage School buildings, and assisted considerably in making the course a success.

FILMS IN A RURAL SCHOOL

Mr. Lambon, who contributes to this series of articles written by teachers experienced in the use of the film in the classroom, is headmaster of a rural school in the Holland Division of Lincolnshire. Two previous articles have described how films have been used for teaching in an elementary and a central school.

By A. S. C. Lambon, M.R.S.T.

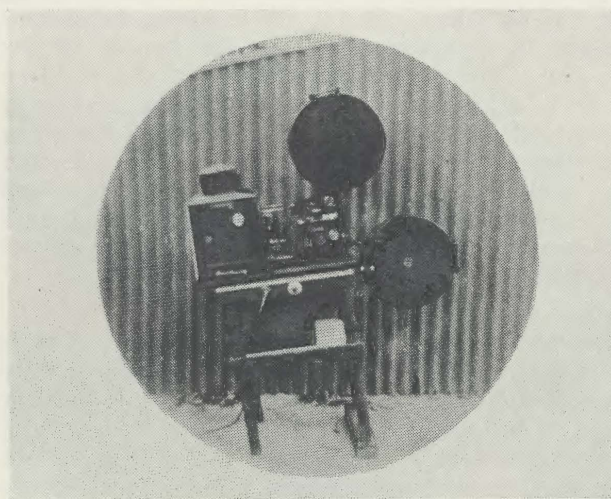
I **BEGAN** to use a cinema projector in my school in 1930. Although transport was cheap, only 22 per cent. of the children had ever seen a moving picture, and the whole of their perceptual experience was narrow, as their ideas were bounded solely by knowledge of their own locality.

Early difficulties

Little could be done until the novelty had worn off. However, I found that the best method of presentation was to show the film in silence and without any preparation on the part of the children. Immediately afterwards they were allowed to debate the subject matter of the film and to ask any questions. After an interval of a day or two, a written test was given. I still find, after five years, that this method is the best.

We had a 9.5 mm. machine of well-known make and a hand dynamo; a passage in which 30 children could be seated, and which was easily darkened, was available. Shortly after we started, the school was connected to the mains, and the hand dynamo was then discarded and a motor fitted. The great drawback, however, was the lack of films suitable for school use. We were borrowing from the old Empire Marketing Board Library, and we also made

depend solely upon accumulators. By this time I had acquired a Butcher's Empire Model No. 2 machine which cost me less than £2. It is of standard size, with lamphouse, 4½ inch condenser, 3 inch



The projector used by Mr. Lambon—Messrs. Butchers' Empire Model No. 2 machine



Class assembled for exhibition of the film ISLES OF SUNSHINE

use of several of the industrial films; but many of the films which we received had been badly damaged. Nor was I satisfied with the sub-standard machine we were using, not only because of the difficulty in obtaining films for it, but also because a reasonably large picture was beyond the power of the lamp.

Early in 1932 I was transferred to my present school; there was no power laid on, so I had to

lenses, automatic safety shutter and spool boxes, and can be used both for films and for lantern work. The latter point is greatly in its favour, as slides are possibly of more value than films in the junior section. Incidentally the films used are all non-inflammable.

I have converted an old cloakroom which is now capable of seating 50 children in comfort. Recently, I have carried power from my own plant to this room, and am now able to use a motor. The machine is always ready for use so no time is lost; the children march to their places, the film is shown, and they return to their classes. The cinema lessons are given once a fortnight, each lasting about half-an-hour, and the same standard of behaviour as that expected in the classroom is insisted upon. I often find it necessary to show a film a second, or even a third time if the subject matter is new.

I have tried many types of screen, but have gone back to an ordinary twill sheet, which proves as satisfactory as any, and has the added advantage of being able to be rolled up when not in use.

The following are the films which I used during a term's work on Canada, and I give the order in which I received the films from the old Empire Marketing Board Library:—

- (1) Pathways of the Rockies.
- (2) Conquest:—a splendid film, unfortunately not listed now.
- (3) Conquest of the Forest.
- (4) Lumbering in British Columbia.
- (5) Birds and Beasts of Canada.
- (6) Niagara the Glorious, and Winter Witheries of Niagara.
- (7) Winter in Canada.

Sound or silent films ?

The boys are occupied at present in fitting a turntable and synchronising gear. This does not mean that I have a preference for the sound film ; on the contrary, I would say that if the film is to serve a useful purpose in our schools, whatever their type, and in whatever district they may be, it will have to be silent. It should, however, be accompanied by prepared notes for the benefit of the teacher. The mental capabilities of the children vary so much from district to district, and from class to class, that it would be impossible for all to understand the same talking version. The teacher understands the mentality of his own class and their special requirements, and therefore stands a far better chance than the unseen narrator of "getting the facts home."

Future developments

As regards the future, I am uncertain. How is the producer going to value his films ? Commercially or educationally ? Are we to have talkie or silent films ? As I see it, the producer must be free from any financial bias, so that art and utility are not sacrificed to commercial gain. The appeal of the

film must be to the child mind rather than to the adult mind. Whenever possible, dramatisation should be used, since it is through actualities related to human life, that the child will best gain a clear perception. Above all, *plain, simple maps and diagrams are a necessity.*

Expense to the school is another factor which must be considered. The greater part of the apparatus will have to be purchased by the teachers, or by school efforts, such as concerts, etc. Good silent machines can be bought at a reasonable cost, and the upkeep is small. On the other hand, without power, the talkie is useless, and the extra cost of its purchase and upkeep is considerable. The only cost to this school has been carriage on films, and this has been defrayed under postage accounts.

The value of a central Film Library

If the film is to take its place in the schools, each county must have its Film Library so that those interested in educational films can book films for future use. It could be worked as a circulating library in very much the same way as the county library scheme is carried out, *i.e.*, sets of books are changed every three or six months. It would be quite an easy matter for a supply of films to be circulated in the same way to each centre, from an Educational Film Headquarters.

And now, my last word to members of my profession : the cinema, like the wireless, whether you like it or not, has come to stay. Let it help you in your work. It will not do your job, but with your co-operation it can and will become your valuable ally.

SIR CHARLES CLELAND AT LOUGHBOROUGH

"THERE is no doubt that of recent years the leaders of the British film industry have begun to take more seriously the responsibility of the film as a general agency of culture," said Sir Charles Cleland in his inaugural address at the Loughborough College Summer School organised by the British Film Institute, August 12th-17th. He was referring to the comparatively recent change of attitude towards the film, for as he pointed out "it was not so many years ago that the very idea of associating films with education was smiled at." But producers of educational films were now co-operating with and seeking the advice of the British Film Institute to ensure that their films were going to be of use to teachers.

He suggested that this progressive interest in education was not unconnected with the hard times through which the cinema industry had been lately passing, which indicated that a new stage had been reached in the evolution of the public demand for film entertainment. A rising level of taste was evident. He referred to the spread of Repertory, News and other specialist theatres and the growth of film societies which demanded a better type of film than that seen in ordinary theatres. "It is only when such progress is made in the appreciation of films and in the public taste that we can expect to make substantial progress in the use of the film for classroom instruction," said Sir Charles.

He then quoted figures which showed how far Britain lagged behind other countries in this method of education. "The price of projectors is high and will remain high so

long as educators are timid and spasmodic in their purchases," said Sir Charles. A widespread and organised demand from schools would have, he believed, great effect in cheapening their cost. He acknowledged the difficulties which faced the teacher in selecting apparatus.

But the British Film Institute was ready to give advice and guidance, and he urged that every organisation of teachers and every L.E.A. should affiliate to the British Film Institute and make use of the services it had to offer. He then referred to the work of the Institute and the establishment of the National Film Library, which teachers would be able to use as a central agency of film supply.

Concluding, Sir Charles said that there was a long chain to be linked up from the teacher in the classroom through the subject specialist, manufacturer of apparatus, director of films, and lastly, the business man who controlled the process of production. Summer Schools of this kind, he suggested, were a means of bringing together these different kinds of persons and getting them to see one another's point of view.

The chief aim of the course was to give the 500 teachers who attended the Summer School some knowledge of educational films and their use in the class-room, and to meet the needs of those who wished to learn to handle apparatus and make films.

Among the lecturers were Mr. G. T. Hankin, H.M.I., Mr. H. D. Waley (Technical Editor of *SIGHT and SOUND*), Mr. F. A. Hoare (Western Electric Company), Miss M. Locket (G.B. Instructional Films Bureau), Mr. W. H. George, B.Sc. ("William Rhodes" School, Chesterfield) and Mr. Wilfred E. L. Day, F.R.P.S., F.R.S.A.

EXAMINING EDUCATIONAL FILMS

A Method for Synchronous Recording of Opinion

By H. E. Dance, M.Eng. A.M.I.E.E.

WHEN an educational film has been completed it should be viewed by a group of teachers who are interested in the subject and should be examined by them with reference to its teaching value. The usual practice is to show the film, two or three times if necessary, and to obtain the teachers' opinion afterwards.

Value of a synchronised record

By simple tests it can be shown that such opinions are of a very general character, covering the whole content of the film, and although they are of value to the producer, they would be of much greater value if the criticisms were distributed and properly related to the different sections of the subject matter.

When there is only one observer it is a simple matter to survey the film step by step after a complete initial review, and to comment on each step separately, but if there is a group of, say, ten observers their interests and opinions are likely to be so diverse that it is impossible to control the film at a single showing to meet all their needs. Experiments have been made on the method about to be described with the object of securing a synchronised record of opinion while the film is being shown.

For the sake of simplicity, the application of the method to give fully automatic recording, such as might be employed in a theatre which is much used for the regular and frequent

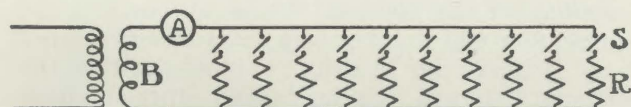


Fig. 1.

examination of films, is described. Simpler and less automatic modifications suitable for use in places which are less frequently employed for viewing are also explained.

How the record is obtained

The operating circuit is shown in Fig. 1. "B" is a supply of electricity. A number of resistances "R" are connected in parallel to the circuit by a corresponding number of switches "S." The current is recorded by the ammeter "A" the chart of which is driven synchronously with the projector, either by direct mechanical connection to it or by the use of synchronous motors or "Selsyn" units. One switch and resistance is placed at each seat and the switch may be of the push-button or tumbler type. If the viewing theatre is large it will be unnecessary to fit every seat with switches, as a sufficiently representative opinion should be obtained from 15 or 20 selected observers.

All the resistances are equal and the total current in the circuit is therefore proportional to the number of switches which are closed.

Fig. 2 shows the type of record obtained. In this case information was required as to the time for which a certain repetitive detail in a film should be shown before passing on to the next item. The viewers were asked to close their switches when they thought the item had been shown for sufficient time. The curve is interesting, for it shows very rapid perception by two viewers and very slow perception by four, while the bulk were satisfied in just over two minutes. In this case there was no pre-viewing of the film.

Fig. 3 shows the type of chart obtained when the question is whether the tempo of the film is too fast for educational purposes. In this case the viewer is asked to close his

switch if he considers that any part of the film should be shown for a longer period than is allowed in the continuous run, and to open it if he considers that the film gives sufficient time for a student to receive the content. It will be seen that as the chart runs synchronously with the film the scale can be marked in feet of film.

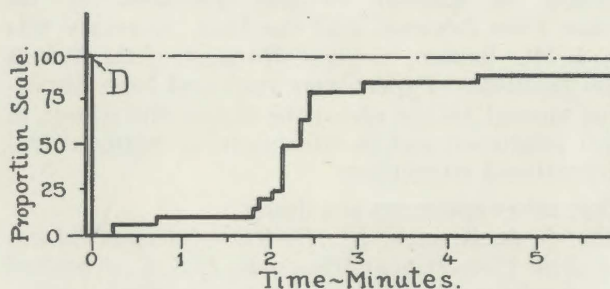


Fig. 2.

As the number of viewers will not always be the same all viewers should close their switches just before the film is shown, and the maximum deflection "D" is thus obtained. This deflection indicates the number of observers present, and it may be scaled 100 on the chart as shown. The switches are then opened and the showing of the film proceeds.

On completion the producer can at once find with reference to any part of the film the number of observers "A" who consider the tempo to be correct and the number "B" who do not.

By using somewhat more complicated wiring and a multiple process recorder instead of a recording ammeter, the opinion of each observer could be taken separately.

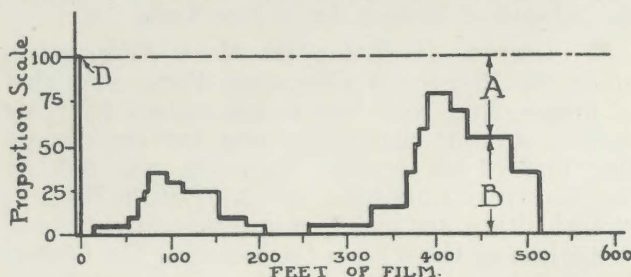


Fig. 3.

For theatres in which only occasional examination of films takes place, the cost of a recording ammeter can be avoided by using a simple indicating meter, the readings of which are noted from time to time by an assistant.

It would be possible to take opinion with reference to more than one aspect of the film at the same time by installing more than one switch at each seat and making more than one record, but it is believed that the most satisfactory result can be obtained only by concentration on a single aspect at a time. Several records may be made, however, on a single chart in sequence.

MICKEY MOUSE and SILLY SYMPHONY cartoons in 16 mm. size are now available for hire exclusively through ENSIGN FILM LIBRARY.

WORLD EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Oxford—August 10 to 17, 1935

VISUAL SECTION

THE Visual Section of the Conference of the World Federation of Educational Associations, which was organised by the British Film Institute, was attended by delegates from all parts of the world. The President of the Section was the Marchese Paulucci di Calboli Barone, *President of the Italian Film Institute*, and the Hon. Secretary was Mr. J. W. Brown, *General Manager of the British Film Institute*. Papers were read and keen discussions ensued on the use of the film in the school, in adult education and in education for national and international citizenship.

What other countries are doing

Dr. R. A. Kissack, Jr., *Director of Visual Education at the University of Minnesota, U.S.A.*, described an interesting experiment at an American university, where films were viewed daily by experts, catalogued and annotated, booked for future classroom showing and, if wanted for frequent use, added to the Film Library. New equipment was installed, professional operators engaged and technical assistants trained, with the result that now at short notice any type of visual aid is available for use in any classroom. At present no special state aid is given for the provision of films in schools. It was hoped to form an American Film Institute to act as a centralised bureau of information for educational films. A Film Library for preserving and distributing historical and cultural films has recently been established at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

M. Lebrun, *Director of the Musée Pédagogique*, under the Ministry of Education, Paris, said that in France films were lent to the schools by State service, without charge and post free both ways. One-third of the cost of apparatus was met by the Ministry of Education, one-third by the Ministry of Agriculture, and one-third was raised by the local authorities or the schools themselves. The Central Film Library of the Musée Pédagogique distributed over 50,000 films to schools last year. In October the Musée would publish a first list of scientific films made non-commercially.

Dr. Zierold, *Director of the National Centre for Educational Films in Berlin*, under the German Ministry of Education, said that, for economic reasons, German schools were at present using only silent films, teachers being provided with specially prepared commentaries, but it was hoped gradually to change over to sound films. In 1934 the Germans established the National Centre. Twenty-four film centres in different districts assisted the Centre and these in turn were connected with 800 centres in towns, which distributed films and apparatus

to the schools and made provision for static pictures and for the instruction of teachers in film technique.

The Centre had a Technical Department which, after testing the many types of sub-standard apparatus on the market, chose three suitable models for installation in the schools. About 3,500 sets had already been installed. These were examined regularly to ensure that they complied with the Centre's requirements, thus enabling new apparatus to be considered and old discarded. Primary and secondary schools and universities came within the purview of the Centre and it was hoped shortly to include technical institutes.

As a temporary expedient the project was financed by all pupils at schools using the films paying 20 Pfennig (about 4d.) every three months. The annual sum thus raised was about £370,000, and the ultimate aim was to provide every school with apparatus and a small library of films.

The educational film in Britain

Mr. F. A. Ring, a member of the *Executive Committee of the National Union of Teachers* and representative of that body on the Advisory Council of the British Film Institute, pointed out that this Conference showed how far behind other countries Great Britain was in the use of the film in the classroom, only one school in 500 in this country being equipped with a projector. He was of the opinion that the State should bear the total cost of both films and apparatus, and that the British Film Institute should receive a subsidy to cover the cost of reviewing educational films and providing experts to assist in their production. The first need was a central source of supply, if possible, with standardised costs, so that schools might obtain what was required with a minimum of inconvenience. The second was a comprehensive, accurate and critical catalogue of educational films. The British Film Institute was compiling such a catalogue and had recently established the machinery for the setting up of a National Film Library.

International exchange

Mr. J. W. Brown, referred to the Customs Convention for Facilitating the International Circulation of Educational Films, and emphasised that a central agency was needed in each country to facilitate the interchange of educational films.

Representatives of all countries urged international co-operation, including France and Germany, who already had effective national distribution centres. Dr. Rudolf Arnheim, speaking for Dr. De Feo, *Director of the International Institute of Educational Cinematography*, gave a

summary of the basic regulations governing the application of the Customs Convention, which has now been ratified by Great Britain, France, Bulgaria, Chile, India, Ireland, Italy, Monaco, Rumania and Switzerland.

Films and international understanding

Dr. N. Gangulee, *Professor of Agriculture at the University of Calcutta*, stressed the importance of close co-operation between producers and educationists as being the only way to ensure that the film was used to promote better understanding between nations, and to avoid productions which grossly misrepresented the peoples they set out to portray. Similar co-operation was needed on the distribution, as well as the production side. As a result of investigations he had found that keen competition between agencies neither in touch with educational bodies nor with public opinion in the countries concerned, had deplorable results as far as film distribution in India and the Near East was concerned. He suggested that the International Institute of Educational Cinematography might help by making a survey of the position and prospects of the educational film in India, China and the Near East, by exploring every avenue for enlisting the co-operation of non-official educational and social bodies, and by assisting in promoting film institutes in countries where they did not exist.

Films and adult education

Mr. A. C. Cameron, *Secretary to the City of Oxford Education Committee, and a Governor of the British Film Institute*, also emphasised that "any film producing country is going increasingly to be judged by its neighbours on the strength of the films it produces. A film has a national conception but an international life." He pointed out that the British Film Institute now had official reference from the Home Office Advisory Committee, to the effect that it might issue a "Voucher of Approval," guaranteeing the historical accuracy of any film submitted by any producer to the Institute for examination.

Dr. D. van Stavaren, *President of the State Film Censorship Board of Holland, and of the Nederland Cultural Film Institute*, spoke of the successful use to which the instructional film had been put in Holland in recruiting large numbers of workers to the Institute for the Education of the Working-classes; such institutes were governed and financially supported by the workers themselves. He particularly emphasised the need of teaching film appreciation for "it is only by raising the standard of public taste," he said, "that we may expect an improvement in the standard of films produced."

Educational film demonstrations

Demonstrations of educational films produced by firms and organisations in America, England, France and Germany, and an exhibition of amateur films made by teachers in England were given during the Conference.



From the series of films on PHYSICAL TRAINING produced by G.B. Instructional. The film dealing with infants was shown to the delegates at the World Conference

USING THE FILM IN TEACHING

"Teachers cannot afford to ignore the educational claims of the film," said Mr. R. M. Allardyce, addressing the Regional British Isles Conference of the New Education Fellowship at St. Andrews on August 17th.* "How far we go in conceding these claims," he said, "is a matter for us to settle according to our individual conscience." Personally he had come to the following conclusions:—

- (a) The film could be particularly useful as an aid in teaching certain subjects, e.g., nature study, geography.
- (b) With mentally defective children and certain groups of backward children it could be beneficial in maintaining interest and developing vocabulary.
- (c) General interest films make an excellent substitute for the occasional lecture.

Mr. Allardyce went on to consider whether any broad principles could be laid down as a guide to the use of the film, and summing up, he suggested the following:—

- (a) The film must be sincerely a teaching film without preaching or propaganda or any other impurity.
- (b) The film should be an instrument in the hands of the teacher, not a device to replace the teacher.
- (c) The use of the film in class teaching must not be casual, but carefully planned as other teaching is.

A further important question to be considered was whether the general introduction of the film into the classroom was practical and advisable at the present stage, bearing in mind the necessity of a reasonably foolproof, enduring and cheap machine, and the need of a regular supply of good films. As far as silent films were concerned he thought it to be practical; in regard to talking films he reserved judgment. If practical, was it advisable? This he felt depended on the individual school and teacher. "Some of you are afraid of the mechanical side. Well," concluded Mr. Allardyce, "if you can work a sewing machine you are quite competent to tackle the average projector."

* Eight sessions of the Conference were devoted to discussions on the cinema, and demonstrations of films were also arranged.

PUBLICATIONS

THE FUTURE OF THE FILMS ACT, by S. Rowson, M.Sc., F.S.S., 111, Wardour Street, London, W.1.

The 'average Englishman,' unlike his continental counterpart, is unaware how much of the money which he pays for his cigarettes, petrol and tea is tax. The 'man in the street' is quite unmoved, even if he is aware of the fact that of the 9d. he pays for admission to his local cinema 1½d. is tax. The 'representative film-goer' has heard only in a vague sort of way that there is a Films Act; occasionally he recalls that each film he sees is prefaced by a Board of Trade Registration Certificate, and that the two things may possibly be connected.

This ignorance of the Films Act (1927), more generally referred to as the "Quota Act," is shared even by those followers of the cinema who, it might be presumed, should know better. As recently as September 16th, the film critic of the *Evening Standard* wrote:

"We have a Quota Act which forces exhibitors to show a maximum percentage of British films in their programmes. This percentage is progressive and will soon reach the formidable figure of *sixty* per cent."

By no stretch of imagination can this be taken as a printer's error for *twenty*, the maximum under the Act.

During the eight years the Act has been in force I can recall only one informative article in any leading periodical or film journal which attempted to explain this Act or to discuss its implications. Yet twenty million film-goers, each week, enjoy (or endure) in the programmes which they see, about one film in four which would never have been produced but for the Films Act.

The present Act is entering upon the last two years of its existence, and those inside the industry and those outside who watch the activities of the industry, are all anxiously attempting to influence the shape of its successor—if any. It is a good thing, even at this late stage, that we have a sound critical and authoritative pamphlet on the matter, *The Future of the Films Act*, by S. Rowson, M.Sc., F.S.S. Despite the fact that its title refers only to the 'future' of the Act, the pamphlet explains also how the Act came into existence; how experience has shown some of its sections to be impracticable and only honoured in the breach (particularly block-and-blind-booking); how some of the American film companies, whose primary interest is obviously not the fostering of a creditable British film industry, have managed to evade the spirit, whilst carrying out the letter of the law; how the protection afforded by the Act enables the temporary profitable exploitation of 'Quota quickies' which discredit British film production as a whole.

From his brilliant analysis of the present Act, Mr. Rowson goes on to suggest its future, writing

in an impeccable style which could not offend the most academic purist and which is free of all film journalese.

Few Englishmen will disagree with his opinion that the Act in some modified form should continue.

A whole industry has been built up in England. It is giving employment to thousands of workers; it is giving dividends to large numbers of investors; it is retaining in England, for *British* films, all that creative and artistic talent which, prior to the Act, was forced to make the trans-Atlantic trip for an opportunity of expression. Producers and all those concerned in production anxiously demand the continuance of the Act.

The film patron, as usual, is unvoiced. But if he were asked—quite apart from his innate patriotism—whether he wanted a return of the conditions under which it was impossible to see films like *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Henry VIII*, *The 39 Steps*, *Lorna Doone*, the Gracie Fields comedies, *Rome Express* and the Lynn-Walls farces (to take a small but catholic selection), he would be amazed at the obvious inanity of the question, and might point out that it was not until the production of good British films that a large section of the present cinema patrons entered a cinema.

The cinema exhibitor is, perhaps, more concerned about the future of the Act than his colleagues in other sections of the Trade, for where the Act operates harshly, it is he that suffers; he knows that good British films are profitable, but often he cannot get them because the circuit-owned halls in his neighbourhood, being part of, or affiliated to, the major British producing concerns, 'bar' him. In order to conform to the Act, he is reduced to showing mainly cheap Quota quickies handled by some of the American companies. This not only alienates his patrons, but tends to make the public rightly critical and suspicious of all British productions. The Act contains the machinery for granting dispensation in special cases, but he finds in practice that the Board of Trade is very difficult to satisfy. He therefore falls back on Quota quickies, and suffers consequent loss of revenue, rather than risk a prosecution. In spite of these troubles, the exhibitor would not wish the Act to die, for *it pays to show good British films*; he would rather it continued with some modification. Without the Act, film production could never have become the serious competitor to American films that it is.

It is to be hoped—in fact, it must be assumed—that the Films Act at the end of 1938 will not expire, but be modified to overcome the various difficulties that have arisen in practice. Reference to Mr. Rowson's pamphlet will readily suggest to those interested what those modifications should be. His paper is so apposite that it would be a pity if anybody at all interested in films omitted to read it; the fact that a copy is obtainable free from the author should not deter even the sceptic from applying for it and reading it carefully. It will appeal not only to the ordinary film-goer, but also to the exhibitor, the renter (American and

British), the producer (independent and 'combine'), and (dare one say so?) even Government officials and Members of Parliament who should long have realized that this Act affects over a thousand million cinema admissions per annum in the United Kingdom alone, quite apart from its importance in providing the Colonies and Dependencies of the Empire with a supply of good British films.

K. A. NYMAN

THE CINE-AMATEUR'S WORKSHOP

by D. Charles Ottley. Routledge, 1935. 138 pp. 8vo. 5s.

Of the several manuals for the cine-amateur which have recently flowed from the pen of the apparently tireless Mr. Ottley, this is certainly one of the most useful and the most comprehensive. Its simplicity and clarity cannot fail to encourage those with no previous experience of home construction; even the amateur of long standing may be surprised at the hints it will give him: while for that large body of amateur workers lying between these two extremes, it will prove a work of reference of considerable value.

To give some idea of the range of the book, it sets out explicit instructions for the construction of tripods, view-finders, camera masks, processing drums and frames, safelights, splicers, rewinders, cone-enlarger, spools, printer, titlers, storage equipment and home-recording apparatus. Mr. Ottley, moreover, has always asserted that careful presentation is as essential to a film's success as careful making. One is not surprised, therefore, to find details given of the construction of prosceniums, screens, projection-cabinet, operating box, lighting systems, and auditorium, and to meet once more with the familiar "Lyric" (Hounslow). The earlier chapters of the book deal with tools, the arrangement of the workshop, and a brief resumé of the principles of the cinema. Where necessary, clear diagrams are given, and the book is illustrated with a number of half-tone plates.

The book is eminently practical, as much in its recognition of working limitations as in its details: it recognises that certain things, the construction of a camera or projector, for example, are definitely outside the ordinary amateur's scope. Within those limitations, however, what one may do with a few simple tools and accessories, with clothes pegs or a mouse-trap or a converted Woolworth's emery-wheel, seems almost without limit.

Many who read the book may wish that more explicit instructions had been given for splicing film. How wide should the join be? What are the relative merits of straight and diagonal splicing? Nor, in an earlier chapter, is the function of a lens-hood even suggested.

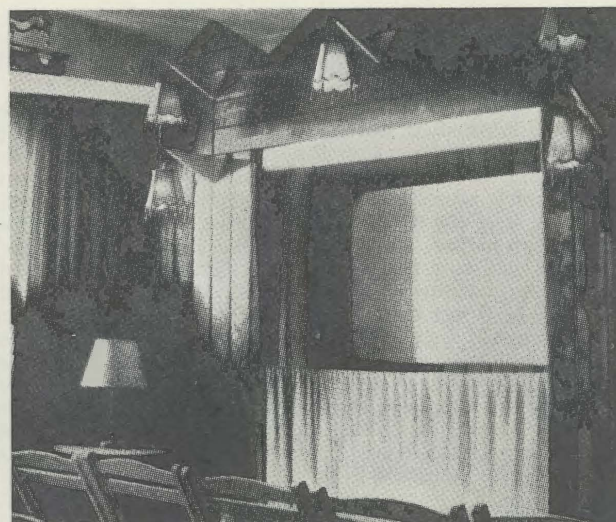
These, however, are relatively small omissions. The book as a whole is to be thoroughly recommended to every film enthusiast who has a liking for using his hands.

E. H. L.

THE CONTENT OF MOTION PICTURES, by Edgar Dale. pp. XVI+234. CHILDREN'S ATTENDANCE AT MOTION PICTURES, by Edgar Dale. pp. X+81. Payne Fund Studies. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935. 10s. 6d. net.

The first section of this book reports a full and careful study of 40 films, supplemented by a less detailed examination of 115, and a general survey of the themes of another 1,500 films, all produced within the years 1920-1931. The main findings are not in any way unexpected, but the report serves the valuable purpose of giving more definite form, supported by ordered evidence, to the impressions received from casual, non-scientific observation.

It shows the emphasis placed by films upon wealth and a degree of luxury inaccessible to most of the audience, upon sex, romantic love, and crime; it studies "vulgarity" in films and analyses the subject matter of newsreels. As far as possible the findings are expressed in numerical form, so that we learn from one summary, for instance, that 'in 97 of the 115 pictures, 449 crimes were attempted or



The cine-amateur's workshop ready for a presentation

Reproduced from Ottley's CINE-AMATEUR'S WORKSHOP

committed. The largest number of crimes in one picture was 25. The villain was responsible for almost one-half of the violent deaths which were attempted or committed. The majority of such deaths were at the hands of the male characters. Eighteen techniques for committing murder were shown. The revolver was by far the most common. Fifty-seven types of crime were shown. *Murder* was the first in rank; *assault and battery*, the second. Interestingly enough in spite of the emphasis on sex pictures, *solicitation* was shown in only one instance." This method naturally has its difficulties, as when it becomes necessary to define three degrees of intensity in lovemaking before giving the incidence per cent. of each; but it does allow of precision and reliability in presenting a kind of information which is quite subtle enough to serve in most discussions of the subject.

Studies of this kind inevitably involve value judgments, and in spite of the author's caution in suggesting conclusions, this is one of the most important aspects of his book; even his selection of significant facts (for in a subject of this kind only a small proportion can be recorded) is influenced by his critical standards. Mr. Dale is fully aware that our criticism of films cannot be dissociated from our ethical standards, and throughout his book he insists on considering the film as one form of education in techniques of living. There can be little doubt that ultimately this must be the only adequate attitude to films. Nevertheless there is the danger of over-simplifying our ethical expectations, and Mr. Dale does not escape it. The "truthful presentation of life" is his constant demand, but his conception of what this is seems hardly adequate when he can note that the newsreel frequently deals with "the realities of life," merely because it shows things that really happened. One would have thought the phrase should have a wider significance than that; a significance, for instance, in which many fairy tales could be said to deal more genuinely with the realities of life than any newsreel item. On the whole Mr. Dale's standards are just respectably liberal. Thus he implies that "illicit love" is a homogeneous category that will be immediately understood, and he makes the usual assumption of the more superficial moralists that actions intended to benefit humanity in general are worthier than those aimed at the happiness of oneself or one's friends.

It seems necessary to insist on these limitations of a useful book because there is a danger that all serious criticism of films will become, in the worst sense, "didactic criticism." This would be no less a calamity for films than for any other form of art. It cannot be too much insisted upon that to criticise a film as a work of art is *not* simply to judge its photography and acting and so on; and equally that an adequate ethical criticism will not decide merely

whether a film encourages adultery or a steady home life. Adequate criticism of the cinema as an art form might well have to acclaim a film that horrified the moralists and bored the aesthetes.

But it should be added that Mr. Dale's simplified approach is partly dictated, if not justified, by his special concern with the effects of films on children. The second study in this volume is devoted chiefly to proving the great extent of children's attendance at cinemas, the evidence being presented in great detail here because the findings reverse those of an earlier study by Holmes. Instead of Holmes' estimate that only 6.0 per cent. of film audiences consist of children under seventeen years old, Mr. Dale shows that at least 14.6 per cent. of a representative audience in America would be children under fourteen years old, and 36.7 per cent. under twenty-one. The care and thoroughness of this investigation should finally remove any doubt of the large proportion of children included in American cinema audiences, and the results will no doubt strengthen educationists in their demand for a hearing from the film industry.

D.W.H.

1935-6 MOTION PICTURE ALMANAC (International Edition). Edited by Terry Ramsaye. *Motion Picture Herald*, 310, Regent St., London W.1. pp. 1,102. £1 0s. 0d.

This volume, published by the proprietors of *The Motion Picture Herald*, constitutes a complete guide to the American motion picture industry. In addition it includes a considerable amount of international information. Outstanding sections of the work are as follows: detailed reviews of the principal films released in America between 1934 and May 1st, 1935; a compendious "Who's Who" of outstanding personalities in the industry, British as well as American; details of the personnel and accounts of American companies; 1934 product of American companies; American reviewing organisations; films released in 1934-5 and a complete list of sound films up to 1934; a list of American theatres and theatre statistics; an account of conditions in foreign countries, and a list of foreign organisations; and a publications section, giving details of American and foreign publications and a full bibliography, in classified lists. At the beginning there is a useful index.

There seems a certain amount of repetition, but perhaps this is inevitable in a classified work of this kind. In the list of 1934-5 pictures, for example, are repeated details of films already reviewed on pp. 15-93 as 1934-5 "champions": it seems as if the two lists might have been amalgamated with advantage. In a similar way some details of companies are given in one section, and other details of the same company in another section. In all such cases, however, the index gives all references. The list of foreign organisations is a valuable inclusion, although reference would have been made easier if classification had not been simply alphabetical but by country: the details of each country, now given under 'The Foreign Film Market,' could then have been included under the same headings.

When all such small criticisms have been made, however, the book remains a thoroughly useful one, and a veritable mine for curious research. One may discover, for example, that approximately 75,000,000 people attend the cinema every week in the United States, and approximately 200,000,000 throughout the world; that the number of prints of each feature film required varies from 50 to 250, and that a print can be screened on an average 200 times; that in Egypt 80 per cent. of the films shown are American and 5 per cent. British; that among the films censored in Persia are those showing markedly pacifist tendencies; or that William Hart is 6 ft. 1 in. high and weighs 180 lbs.

The Motion Picture Almanac will form a very valuable addition to the shelves of the Film Institute's information bureau.

E.H.L.

HOW TO ENTER THE FILM WORLD,
by E. G. Cousins. Allen & Unwin: 2s.

In the preface to this book Alexandra Korda says: "Glamour is not the only quality required in order to see

one's photograph in the fan magazines. Real ability to act and the capacity for unlimited hard work are essential."

In twenty concise chapters Mr. Cousins somewhat spoils the illusion of "Glamour" by pointing out that the film industry is a legitimate business and not an institution for waifs and strays. A shareholding uncle, a pretty face, wild dreams of fame and fortune are neither useful nor helpful to enter the film world. A perfect understanding of the word "ability" is indicated. The considerable number of Film Face competitions in the Press during recent years and the efforts of Schools of Film Acting have not so far benefited the British screen one iota.

It is an admirable guide book which deals with the qualifications required, the opportunities, method of approach and prospects not only with regard to film acting but in every other branch of film production from director to "props." The author, in his wisdom, dedicates the work "to the boys and girls who will make the great films of the future."

L.M.W.

THE CINEMA IN EDUCATION. A Handbook for Teachers, by D. Charles Ottley. Routledge. 3s. 6d. net.

Although stocked with considerable information intended to be of practical use to teachers, this is a most unsatisfactory book. Its author has enthusiasm, but his matter is not altogether reliable and is inspired by a wrong attitude which causes him to make claims that cannot be substantiated. If the author were a practising teacher he would realise his ignorance of the technique and problems of class-room teaching, and he would know that an instructional film is not just any film but one constructed on definite principles. Furthermore, he would be aware that the mere showing of a film serves no useful purpose in education and that it is the constructive handling of the film by the teacher which matters.

Again, if Mr. Ottley wishes to be considered an authority he has much to learn especially about psychology, and before he attempts another book on this subject he should understand that, as in all true teaching, films are only of value in so far as they awaken a process of thought, give an experience which children can accept as real and inspire imagination to creative purpose.

Where the author deals with the distribution of films his remarks may mislead. For instance, education authorities intending to form central lending libraries for their schools can now actually purchase films and so create a permanent collection. Also it is astonishing that a handbook claiming to be comprehensive should omit all reference to the products of the G.P.O. Film Unit.

The claim made by the publishers on the dust cover is frankly ridiculous.

F.W.

THE CINEMA IN SCHOOL, by W. H. George, B.Sc., with a foreword by John Grierson, M.A. Pitman. 3s. 6d. net.

Unfortunately *The Cinema in the School* arrived just as this issue was going to press. It is therefore only possible to announce its publication and to promise a detailed criticism in our next issue.

A hurried reading, however, reveals a book made from several years of patient experiment by a man whom Mr. Grierson describes as "a born teacher and, in the northern sense, a canny man, and his readers may trust his judgment."

Since this is Mr. Grierson's estimation of the author, it is safe to recommend Mr. George's book both to educationalists and teachers.

It is profusely illustrated with well chosen stills and useful diagrams explaining all essential operations in the making and projecting of films.

F.W.

A GRAMMAR OF THE FILM

by Raymond Spottiswoode, Faber and Faber, 10s. 6d., will be reviewed in the next issue of SIGHT AND SOUND.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

During the past quarter the Institute has been mainly concerned with the organisation of several important Conferences and Summer Schools.

Summer Schools and Conferences

At the Congress of the World Federation of Educational Associations held at Oxford, August 10-17, the arrangements for the sessions and for the film demonstrations under the Visual Section were made by the Institute. The matters discussed at the sessions included general principles of educational cinematography, existing supplies of films and the type required, the use of films in adult education and in education for national and international citizenship.

At Scarborough the first Summer School for teachers in this country, held August 5-10, was organised by the Institute in collaboration with the Educational Handwork Association.

A special Film Study Course was also organised under the auspices of the Institute at Loughborough College Summer School from August 12-17.

Fuller reference is made to these three meetings elsewhere.

In addition, speakers from the British Film Institute addressed the following meetings:—

British Isles Regional Conference of the New Education Fellowship held at St. Andrews: August 13th-23rd.

City of London Vacation Course in Education: August 8th.

Educational Settlements Association Annual Conference: July 19th.

Welsh Department, Board of Education, Course for Welsh Teachers in Senior Schools: July 5th.

University of London Tutorial Classes Committee, Residential Summer School: August 21st.

Board of Education Course for Teachers in Chemistry in Technical Institutes: July 22nd.

University of Birmingham, History Students' Fellowship, Summer School: August 6th.

The speakers included Mr. G. T. Hankin, H.M.I., Mr. A. Clow Ford (Deputy External Registrar, University of London), Mr. W. Farr (British Film Institute), Mr. E. H. Lindgren (Librarian, National Film Library).

Demonstrations of educational films have been a feature of the Summer Schools, meetings and conferences, and the Institute is greatly indebted to the many firms which have supplied projection apparatus and films, including Western Electric Company, G-B Instructional, Steuart Films, Visual Education, Siemens Halske (Cinepro, Ltd.), S.P. Equipments, Ltd., Pathéscope, Dufay-Colour, Ltd., Kodak, Bakelite, Associated British Film Distributors, Zenifilms, Wardour Films, Ensign, Ltd., Denning Films.

The Institute has also received requests from the following organisations for assistance in arranging demonstrations and providing speakers at meetings which they are organising during the coming winter: Local N.U.T. groups, including Blackburn, Runcorn and District, West Yorkshire, Walsall and District St. Albans and District, Newcastle, West Ham, Romford and District; the Bath Education Society; Bath Soroptomists Club; University of Leeds.

The Institute welcomes this active interest in the educational film, and is glad to put its services at the disposal of such groups.

Deputation to the L.C.C. Education Committee

A deputation of Governors of the Institute and Chairmen of the Education Panel waited on a sub-committee of the Education Committee of the L.C.C. on July 8th to place before it various matters relating to the use of the cinematograph for educational purposes, and to represent to it that sufficient progress had taken place since the Institute's establishment to justify the L.C.C. in undertaking an experiment with the use of films in schools. Subsequently at the meeting of the Education Committee of the L.C.C. which was held on July 24th, £1,000 was voted for experimenting with films for educational purposes in addition to £300 already voted. Of this sum £800 was to be used for experimenting with the use of silent and sound 16 mm. projectors in classrooms, and £500 to be used for mass demonstrations of specially selected films at local cinemas to groups of schools. It was also decided that the Council should become a corporate member of the Institute, as being the proper and officially recognised body to advise on the use of films for educational purposes.

Meeting of Governors and Local Representatives

Since the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND a meeting has been held, under the chairmanship of the Duke of Sutherland, K.T., between the Governors of the Institute and representatives of the Film Institute Societies. It took place on July 11th at the headquarters of the Institute and was also attended by the Interim Hon. Secretary of the Scottish Film Council. The activities of the year were reviewed, and Sir Charles Cleland expressed the Governors' appreciation of the valuable work being carried out by Societies. Each representative made a short statement on the way in which his own Society has been established, on the work it had carried out, its future programme of activities, and on the difficulties it was facing. A number of ways in which the Governors could assist the local Societies and the local Societies could assist the Institute and, at the same time, develop their own work were discussed, and it was agreed that meetings

between the Governors and the representatives of the local Societies should be held at regular intervals.

Convention for Facilitating the International Circulation of Educational Films

It was reported in the last number of *SIGHT AND SOUND* that the British Film Institute had accepted the invitation of the Board of Education to assist them for a period of five years in the first instance in certifying films under the Finance Act. It will be remembered that the Board of Education were empowered to certify films as being of an educational character and therefore entitled to exemption from Customs duty according to the Convention for Facilitating the International Circulation of Educational Films, and that the Board were enabled after consultation with the Scottish Education Department and the Ministry of Education for Northern Ireland to appoint a body of persons to give advice and assistance in connection with the discharge of their functions. The Institute is now engaged in working out with the Board and with the Customs Office the details of machinery and administration.

Monthly Film Bulletin

The Monthly Film Bulletin has been issued during the past year to full members of the Institute only, but it was decided at the end of the year that beginning with the issue for July, 1935, the Bulletin should also be on sale to associate members at 2d. a copy through the Film Institute Societies.

Both the Education and Entertainment Sections have now been revised. The improvement both in the standards of reviewing and in the utility of the Bulletin as a result of the revision has been widely recognised. The Education Section provides a full description of the contents of each film, a detailed criticism, particulars of country of origin, date of production, distributor, format and length; technical description; statement of purpose of the film and an assessment of its suitability for teaching purposes. In the Entertainment Section each review, besides giving information of the production, distribution, direction, leading players and running time of the film, contains a general outline of the story, and an estimate, by the viewer, of the quality of the direction, photography, settings, acting, etc. Viewers are also instructed to give a clear indication of anything in the film which might be represented as being controversial or objectionable to any section of cinemagoers, and also to indicate the suitability of each film for adults, adolescents, family audiences, and those films which are especially suitable for showing to children under 16. It is hoped that these reviews provide readers with reliable information to assist them in deciding which films they wish to see.

Occasional Leaflets

Two further leaflets have recently been added to the series issued by the Institute:—*Leaflet No. 9* Free Trade in Educational Films, and *Leaflet No. 10* Religious Films, by the Right Rev. E. S. Woods,

Bishop of Croydon (with an appendix on sources of supply).

History and Arts Committee

The Report of the History and Arts Committee on the History Teaching Film will be published in the autumn. It includes sections on experiments and reports on the value of the film for teaching history, the Committee's estimate of the value of history teaching films, the object of the history teaching film, and the consequent principles which should be observed in choosing subjects for films and in producing the films, and concludes with some recommendations to producers of educational films.

Extent of Use of Cinematograph in Schools

It was recently reported that the Institute had undertaken an enquiry into the extent to which schools in Great Britain make use of films for teaching purposes, and that a questionnaire had been circulated. The information obtained is now being examined, and it is estimated that it will be of great value to the Institute and those interested in the use of the cinematograph in schools. The questionnaire aimed at securing information on the number of projectors in use, and their size and type; source of film supply, methods by which films are chosen; any films made or owned by schools; the methods of use—for class work, for general educational shows, or general entertainment shows to larger groups; frequency of film shows, methods of financing the purchase of projectors and hire of films; and concludes by inviting any general remarks or suggestions from the teachers who are using films.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on October 1st, when the Report for the year 1934-5 was adopted.

NEWS FROM BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES

BECONTREE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

At the first meeting of the Provisional Committee at which Mr. W. B. Reidie took the chair, the model "Constitution and Rules" proposed by the British Film Institute were adopted, and three classes of membership approved: full membership, associate membership, and affiliated societies. It was agreed that the constitution and the affiliation terms should be submitted to the secretaries of local organisations, and an Inaugural Conference convened by the Secretary. The Essex Education Committee is considering the provision of a 16 mm. sound-on-film projector. When the projector is available it is intended that its use shall be free to local organisations affiliated to the Society, under the conditions drawn up by the Society.

An exhibit of G.-B. Instructional shorts has been arranged, the films shown being *Roots*, *Shakespeare*, *Town Settlement* and *Physical Training* (Girls).

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: C. Walker, "Eskdale," Old Shoreham Road, Southwick, Sussex.

This Branch has at present under consideration the showing of unusual films; this may be done by the forming of an organisation on the lines of the London Film Society.

The publication of a monthly guide of films being shown in the district is also being considered.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Rev. F. C. Vyvyan, 16, West Park, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

The Bristol and District Film Institute Society was formed in the early part of the year, and it has been awaiting the close of the summer in order to get seriously to its work. In the meantime, however, one general meeting and two meetings of the Council have been held. The Lord Bishop of Bristol consented to become the President of the Society, and Miss G. I. Cottell, B.A., was elected Chairman of Council.

The Branch has 15 full members and several associate members. Two exhibitions of educational films have been arranged. In August the first local Film Bulletin was issued. A further bulletin was issued for September, and it is hoped that this will be continued each month. A public meeting has been arranged for October 15, with Mr. R. S. Lambert, M.A., as the principal speaker.

CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: G. A. Wilkins, "Glencarry," Orchard Avenue, Chichester.

The Society made no arrangements for meetings or demonstrations during the holiday period, but a meeting of all members of the Society is being held on October 14th at which proposals for future activities will be outlined.

LEEDS FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: S. G. Crawford, 3, Hares Mount, Shepherds Lane, Leeds, 8.

No activities have been undertaken by the Society during the Summer, but work will begin again in October.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss Olwen Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4.

In accordance with decisions taken at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, invitations were issued to a number of prominent people in public life who are interested in the cinema, to become Vice-Presidents of the Branch. The following have accepted:—Dame Rachel Crowley, Dr. Winifred Cullis, Sir Norman Angell, Dr. W. H. Coates, The Rt. Rev. E. S. Woods, Bishop of Croydon, Dr. Benjamin Gregory, Mr. Julian Huxley, Mr. Constant Lambert, Mr. R. S. Lambert, Mr. F. Mander, Viscountess Rhondda, Sir Archibald Sinclair, M.P. and Mr. H. G. Wells.

The Winter Season opened with a dinner, dance and film show, at which Lady Levita and Mr. R. S. Lambert spoke on the work of the Institute and its Branches. A sub-standard version of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was shown during the evening. A large number of members of the Society were present, and many new members were recruited.

Arrangements for the coming season include lectures by Mr. Alistair Cooke on "The Cinema in Journalism," M. René Clair, and by arrangement with the Forum Cinema, Villiers Street, Mr. Ivor Montague will speak on Soviet films with special reference to the season of Soviet films to be held at the Forum Cinema.

MANCHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: J. Norman Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

The Society has arranged the following meetings for the coming season: demonstration of sub-standard films; lectures by Miss Mary Field and Mr. F. A. Hoare; a meeting with the Manchester Publicity Association on "Publicity Films" at which Mr. Frank Tilley will speak; demonstration of documentary films made by local amateur film societies; and a joint meeting with all the local amateur film societies and the local association of the National Council of Women at which the latest films made by the G.P.O. Film Unit will be shown.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: J. Alex. Parker, 5 and 6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

There is small demand during the summer months for shows and lectures, and the work of the Committee has

been centred on making preparations for increased activity during the new Season, which was opened on September 24th. Mr. William Farr, of the British Film Institute, was present.

Arrangements have been made for talks to be given by Miss Mary Field, Mr. Alistair Cooke, and Mr. W. H. George. A series of talks on individual directors and producing units will be given by Professor Lyon Blease (on Walt Disney), by Mr. J. Alex. Parker (on "The Foreigners in Hollywood"), by Dr. Dorothy Knowles (on the French directors), by Mr. Ingram Knowles (on the Modern Russian cinema), and by Mr. Cyril Ray (on the British directors).

There will be the usual series of private shows of unusual and notable films at a city theatre, the first of which is being held at the Prince of Wales Cinema on October 18th.

The Society has begun, in conjunction with the Liverpool Council of Social Service, to arrange 16 mm. sound film shows on a modern projector for occupational centres, service clubs, boys' and girls' clubs and various educational and religious institutes.

NORTHERN IRELAND FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: W. H. Welply, O.B.E., B.A., Rantalard, Whitehouse, Belfast.

The Branch, during the first year of its existence, was mainly concerned with the preliminary work necessary for placing the Society on a firm and workable basis. A monthly Bulletin of local films was issued to members, and one public lecture was held.

During this season it is hoped that the Branch will be able to enlarge the scope of its activities, and, if possible, to co-operate with various educational societies in arranging conferences and lectures dealing with the use of films in school work.

SALFORD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Manchester.

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Interim Hon. Sec.: C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2.

The outstanding recent work of the Council has resulted from a joint meeting of representatives of the Education Panel and of the Scottish Educational Film Association. A scheme for the reviewing of scholastic films was drawn up and there are good reasons for believing that the 1935-36 season will see great progress made by the educational cinema in Scotland. A sub-committee of the Education Panel is preparing a report on "mass demonstrations" of educational films to children in public cinemas. The Scottish Educational Film Association has established six branches and is engaged in the formation of five other branches. Dundee has been the centre of an intensive campaign in connection with the formation of one of these branches and also the creation of the proposed Dundee and St. Andrews Film Society. On September 5th Mr. Oakley addressed the Dundee Rotary Club on this subject and, on October 3rd, a meeting of citizens of Dundee interested in the projects. The Council's general meeting was held in the Glasgow Education Offices on Saturday, September 28th, and is to be reported in the next number of SIGHT AND SOUND. The Scottish Film Council published its first Monthly Bulletin towards the end of September. It is distributed to Scottish members of the Institute, members of the Scottish Film Council's Panels, and to many members of the fifty bodies represented on the Council or its Panels.

Branches are also being formed for the following districts:—

HUDDERSFIELD, Hon. Sec.: H. R. Jeans, c/o Daily Examiner, Huddersfield.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE, Hon. Sec.: c/o British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

NORTHAMPTON, Hon. Sec.: C. H. Smith, 131, Wellingborough Road, Northampton.

LOUGHBOROUGH, Hon. Sec.: Loughborough F. I. Society, Loughborough College, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

BILLINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Sec.: H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees, Co. Durham.

The following films will be shown by the Society during the coming season: October 9th, *Maskerade*; November 13th, *Charlemagne*; January 22nd, *Deutschland Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. Various other continental films will also be shown during the year.

There is no formal membership of the Society, and performances are open to the public.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Birmingham, 15.

The new season begins on October 20th with René Clair's *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, and will continue on the first Sunday in each month until April.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss J. O'Sullivan, 36, Gt. Smith Street, London, S.W.1.

The objects of the Catholic Film Society are to instruct Catholics in film technique with a view to their better understanding of this medium, and to provide (chiefly by means of an annual competition) a Catholic Film Library for use in Catholic halls, clubs and schools. Membership is open to all except the professional producer and the professional actor. Full particulars may be obtained from the secretary.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss C. Winifred Harley, The Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

The Children's Film Society opens its season on October 19th at the Everyman Cinema Theatre when Mr. Paul Rotha will show one of his new films, *Great Cargoes*. It is hoped that on November 16th Miss Mary Field will bring one of her films of bird life, and that on December 14th Mr. Humphrey Jennings of *Gasparcolor*, whose *Light Thief* was so interesting, will come to talk about colour films. The Society is for all young people who are interested in films and its aim is "to have good films and good fun." Members will not only see the best films, but the wonders of film making will also be explained.

The Society is pleased to announce that the Government has exempted it from entertainment tax on account of the cultural and educational value of its programmes. This will enable the Society to reduce its subscription to 5s. for the six performances and guest tickets to 1s. each.

It is hoped that this will enable many more children to join.

THE FILM SOCIETY, LONDON, Secretary: Miss Mary Brown, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1.

At the Annual Meeting of the Film Society the resignation of the secretary, Miss J. M. Harvey, was announced. She will be succeeded by Miss Mary Brown, who has been her assistant for the last four years. Miss Harvey has been secretary of the Society since its formation in 1925, but as she has been elected a member of its Council her connection will not be severed.

During the season 1934-35 the Society continued its policy of selecting the most significant work available from international sources, and showed sixteen French, ten British, nine German, two Austrian, two U.S.S.R., one American, one Portuguese, one Dutch, and two Polish films.

Among the films to be shown to members during the coming season are three from U.S.S.R.: *The Revolt of the Fishermen*, by Piscator; *Three Songs of Lenin*, by Dziga Vertov, and *The Great Consoler*, by Kuleshov.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW, Hon. Sec.: D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

Preparations are going forward for the opening of the sixth season of the Society, and the first meeting is being held on October 13th. The following films will be shown during the coming winter: October 13th, *Der Schimmelreiter*, *Dawn to Dawn*, *Quiet of the Country*; November 3rd, *Lac aux Dames*, *Night on the Bare Mountain*; November 24th: *The Song of Ceylon*, *Unfinished Symphony* (German version), *Nights of St. Petersburg*.

HAMPSTEAD FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: J. S. Fairfax-Jones, The Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

The Society will hold its concluding performance of the first season in October.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

Monthly exhibitions of films (sound and silent) of outstanding interest and artistic value, of the type not ordinarily shown in the commercial cinemas, will be resumed at Vaughan College, commencing Saturday, October 26th.

In addition, illustrated lectures on the Art of the Cinema will be given by Richard Southern, Carl Matthew, Ivor Montagu, and Discussion Groups are to be arranged.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: T. Cavanagh, 86, Hulton Street, Salford 5, Lancs.

A film display is being arranged for the end of October, which will be followed by a members' meeting to discuss re-organisation, etc. The attitude of the Society to Sunday shows will also be defined.

MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE, Secretary: T. H. Baxter, F.R.G.S., 59, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

This Committee is now busy with its arrangements and organisation for showings through the autumn and winter season. With its own operator, projector and van, it carries through a series of showings in halls. Arrangements are practically complete for new films of India, Burma and Ceylon next year. The 16 mm. edition of *Japan*, 4 reels, silent, is now ready. The season commences with a week in Aberdeen, and includes over 40 showings before Christmas.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY, Secretary: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, Stoke Newington, N.16.

The North London Film Society under the new presidency of Andrew Buchanan commence their second season of film exhibitions and lectures on November 3rd. Monthly performances will be held at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly, W. Among the films it is proposed to screen are:—*Zero de Conduite* (Vigo); *Mistigri* (Lachman); *Deserter* (Pudovkin); *Anna und Elisabeth* (Wysbar); *Ashes* (M. Murata), also a number of interesting shorts and surrealist films including:—*The Love of Zero* (R. Florey); *The Bridge* (J. Ivens); and *H₂O* (R. Steiner). In conjunction with the film exhibitions the following lectures have been arranged: A. Lebrun on "The Three Minute Film," I. Montagu on "Tendencies in the Russian Cinema," A. Buchanan on "The News Reel and News Magazine."

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, Secretary: O. A. Minns, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

The Society's new religious talking film *Barabbas*, produced by British National Films Ltd., directed by Jas. B. Sloan, from the play by the Rev. S. N. Sedgwick, scenario by Jean Ross, is now available for distribution in 35 mm. and 16 mm. editions.

Through the medium of the cinema and such films as *Barabbas* (the film story of the rebel redeemed by love), and *Inasmuch* (St. Francis and the Beggar woman), *Mastership* (with "Lax of Poplar"), *Frontiers of the Kingdom* (Rhodesian Missions), and *Livingstone* each of which makes its own specific appeal on account of the spiritual influence, high standard and artistic beauty of production, the Religious Film Society aims to convey a series of great messages to the world—through the Churches.

Judging from the number of enquiries recently received and the applications from members of The Guilds of Light, for assistance in purchasing equipment, the Society is anticipating a busy time during the coming winter season, in the course of which it is hoped that two or three other films, now in course of production, or under consideration, will be released.

THE SOUTHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. General Sec.: J. S. Fairfax-Jones; Southampton Hon. Secs.: D. A. Yeoman, J. M. Cameron, 21, Ethelbert Avenue, Bassett Green, Southampton; Winchester Hon. Secs.: Miss Ruth Keyser, C. J. Blackburne, 12, St. Swithun Street, Winchester; Student Hon. Secs.: Miss K. Donnelly, J. V. Ruffell, University College, Southampton.

The Society will begin its fifth season in October. Among the films from which the season's programmes will be selected are: *So Ended a Great Love*, *Remous*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, *Barcarole*, *Unfinished Symphony*, (Original Version), *Hey-Rup*.

The Society has a Branch Organisation for the recruitment of members in Winchester through which about 100 members join annually.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: M. C. Pottinger, c/o Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1.

The Society has arranged for the following films among others to be shown during the coming season:—October 13th: *La Crise est Finie*; November 3rd: *Hey-Rup*; November 24th: *Zero de Conduite*; December 15th: *Der Schimmelreiter*.

In addition matinees for children have been arranged in conjunction with the local branch of the Modern Language Association, and various exhibitions and discussions will be held during the season.

KINO FILMS LTD., Sec.: S. Handel, 84, Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

Formed two years ago with the object of making available to Film Societies and Workers' organisations the great Soviet film masterpieces, and other productions of socio-

logical importance, Kino commenced work with one copy of *Battleship Potemkin*, on 16 mm. Later, *The General Line* was also reduced. Further copies were produced, and later, other films secured.

At the beginning of this year, the organisation was placed on a more definite basis by being incorporated as Kino Films (1935) Ltd., the objects of the company being the spreading of sociological education by means of the cinematograph. A considerable number of different films is now available for hire or purchase, at new low rates for the coming season which more nearly approximate to those of the other libraries.

Amongst the important productions handled are the following:—*Potemkin*, *General Line*, *Mother*, *Storm over Asia*, *New Babylon*, *The Ghost That Never Returns*, *October*, *The Oil Symphony*, *Port of Five Seas*, *The Shadow of the Mine* (German), etc., as well as all the productions of the Workers' Film and Photo League. Copies of all the films are available on 16 mm., and as the demand arises, copies of most will also be produced on 9.5 mm. Prints for private exhibition only may be purchased outright if desired, at reasonable rates.

During the coming season arrangements have been made to obtain the following new films:—*The End of St. Petersburg*, *Arsenal*, *Earth*, *Turksib*, *Fragment of an Empire*, *26 Commissars* and a number of short documentaries.

All new releases are given premieres in Central London, and names and addresses will be welcomed for inclusion in the mailing list.

Membership of the Association is also open to all who are interested in its objects, and new members will be welcomed.

CHRISTIAN CINEMA COUNCIL

About twenty million people, it is estimated, go to the films every week in this country. It has been widely felt that the Christian Church would do well to take account of the influence of such a potent medium, to foster all that is good in this influence and attack what is bad. This feeling has at last found a means of expression, and there has recently come into being a Christian Cinema Council, planned on a national and inter-denominational scale, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as President.

Broadly speaking its object is two-fold. First it will endeavour to assist, and in some measure to focus, all those forces of opinion in our own country and overseas, which make for raising the moral and aesthetic standard of the cinema, and to encourage the production and exhibition of wholesome entertainment films. The descriptive leaflet issued by the Council states that no one would deny that there is a vast amount of clean and wholesome stuff shown at the picture theatres throughout the country, but goes on to point out that there are many other films which are marred by an obsession with sex or crime, or which are merely futile and silly. The harm done by such films, whether from the point of view of damaging adolescent minds, or of giving the African, Indian and other Eastern audiences a wholly misleading picture of English life, is more than can be estimated.

Secondly, the possibility of utilizing the cinematograph for definitely religious purposes is still

largely unexplored; it is hoped that this newly formed Council may prove of some use in this urgent matter, partly by acting as a clearing house for information of what is being already done, and partly by promoting the production of suitable religious films for use in Churches and Mission Halls.

The Council hopes before very long to take steps to initiate a movement, with a nation-wide membership, in support of its aims.

The Secretary of the Christian Cinema Council, 59, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, would be glad to know from clergy and ministers who use films in connection with their work as to make of projector used, size of film, silent or sound, kind of film needed, and any comments to assist the Council in surveying the problem of the supply and production of religious films.

To The Editor.

DEAR SIR,

FILM ON ROMAN EMPIRE

Being about to engage upon a film for use in illustrating the growth and decline of the Roman Empire (geographically), I would like to come into contact with persons interested in such work, in order to eliminate overlapping of effort as far as possible. Might I suggest that such persons should communicate with me?

Yours truly,

E. C. BARTON.

"Iona," Hempstead Road,
Watford, Herts.

TECHNICAL AND TRADE REVIEWS

SPECIAL APPARATUS, No. 3

THE WESTERN-ELECTRIC-KODAK HIGH SPEED MOTION PICTURE TIMING SYSTEM

From particulars kindly supplied by the Western Electric Company

THE high speed timing system described herein was developed by the research laboratories of the Western Electric Company in conjunction with the Kodak Company, and consists fundamentally of three main elements, namely, a high speed motion picture camera, a high precision electric clock and a frequency generator employing a tuning fork to control the alternating current actuating the clock mechanism.

The camera

The camera, which uses standard 16 mm. reversal safety film, has two lens systems, so arranged that when the camera is used to photograph any occurrence, the moving dials of the electric clock are also simultaneously photographed upon each frame of film beside the picture. Upon viewing or projecting the image so made, the time at which any event occurred can thus be read immediately from the direct time record given with the picture of the occurrence.

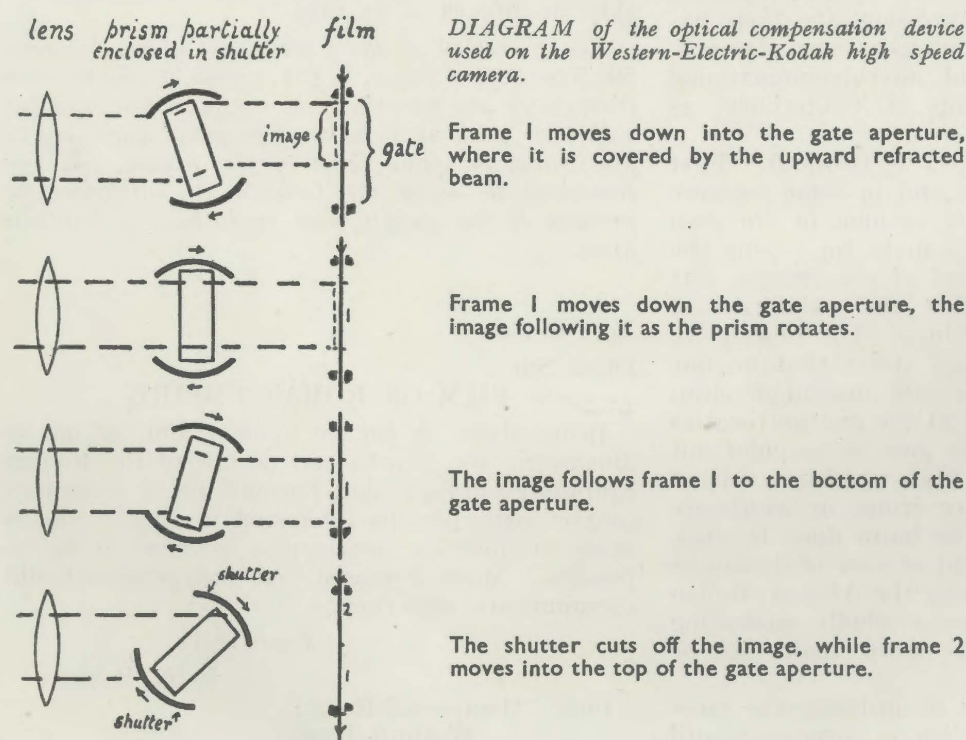
The camera is available in two models, fundamentally similar but differing as regards the driving motor and various secondary features, one being a high speed model taking up to 250 frames per second and the other an ultra-high speed model taking

from 300 to 2,000 frames per second. Owing to the excessive noise, vibration and wear, and the expensive construction and upkeep which would be inherent in a camera of conventional intermittent design if run at high speeds, such mechanism would be highly undesirable for this purpose, and the cameras are, therefore, of the continuous movement type wherein all moving parts operate at constant speed. The film, tensioned by means of a spring mounted top sprocket, is pulled continuously across a gate having an aperture slightly larger than the film frame size in the vertical dimension. The projection of the image on to the moving film is accomplished by means of a uniformly rotating plane parallel plate of glass which is interposed between the lens and the film and which acts as a plane prism. (See illustration.) As the prism revolves the effect is to move the image in the film plane downwards at the same speed as the film during the instant the shutter is open, thereby enabling a sharp picture to be obtained. Two pictures are thus made at each revolution of the plane prism and every frame on the film is exposed. Framing is accomplished either by using an external mask or by small uniformly rotating blades located respectively at the top and bottom of the picture aperture.

The edges of the blades follow the frame lines of the picture down as the film moves. An auxiliary lens and prism system projects an image of the timing dials, suitably illuminated, through the rotating prism so that this image is registered on the side of the film beside the picture.

The high speed, or Type I camera is equipped with a lens turret mounting, a 1½ in. F.2 Kodak Anastigmat lens and a 4 in. F.4.5 Kodak Telephoto lens and the ultra high speed, or Type II camera is fitted with a single 1½ in. F.2 Kodak Anastigmat lens. Other lenses can readily be fitted if desired.

Speed control on the Type I camera is effected



by an electric governor, the setting of which can be varied by means of a speed control knob at the rear of the motor. In the case of the Type II camera the speed is controlled by means of a rheostat in association with a series motor which for short periods can be considerably overvolted. Under such conditions the motor can be made to drive the camera at such a speed that the motor itself runs at about 20,000 r.p.m. Internal gearing of the camera increases this speed up to 80,000 r.p.m. on the shaft which rotates the plane parallel prism. Since as previously stated, two images are registered on the film at each revolution of the plane prism, it follows that the linear speed of the film can be about 160,000 pictures per minute or approximately 2,600 pictures per second.

In practice, excellent photographs have been secured at 2,000 frames per second which when projected at normal speed, give slow motion pictures about a hundred times slower than the original action. This is thirty times slower than ordinary slow motion or fifteen times slower than the ultra slow motion of the cinema.

Electric motor clock unit

The high precision timing system which is an important feature of this apparatus consists of an electric clock which is also available in two types. The Type I clock unit used in conjunction with the Type I camera consists of an electric clock having three concentric dials reading minutes, seconds and hundredths of a second respectively to a total of 59 minutes, 59.99 seconds without repetition.

The Type II clock unit used in conjunction with the Type II camera consists of an electric clock having two concentric dials, one rotating once a minute and divided into 60 divisions for seconds, and the other rotating once a second and graduated into 500 divisions (corresponding to .002 second). Each division is further subdivided by a diagonal line which when read with reference to a stationary central vertical line permits time reading down to one-thousandth of a second.

The dials are actuated by a specially developed salient pole electric motor driven by alternating current, the frequency of which is regulated by a thermostatically controlled tuning fork calibrated to 200 c.p.s. For short periods not exceeding two minutes the accuracy of the timing system with reference to the total time elapsed is within 1/200 of a second. For longer intervals the precision is within one part in 25,000. In comparing closely adjoining pictures these limits of course do not apply, and it therefore becomes feasible to read to one-thousandth of a second in such cases.

Two windows are provided for observing the position of the clock dials. These windows are cut in the reset plate which is turned in a clockwise direction to reset the dials after each occurrence has been timed. One of the windows, illuminated by two automobile head lamp bulbs and small condensing lenses, is located directly under the auxiliary lens and prism system, and reveals the dials

recording absolute time. It is the image of this window which is photographed upon the film. However, since when the camera is operating, this window is not visible to the operator, a further window is provided at an angle of 90 deg. to the left of the objective window. The reading as observed in this window will, of course, be 15 minutes, 15 seconds and 25 hundredths in advance of the absolute time, except when the dials are in the reset position prior to starting. In this position the hundredth second dial is advanced .007 seconds in order to compensate for the time required for the operation of the magnetic starting clutch, and the time which is then indicated by the dials in the observation window is 15 minutes, 15 seconds and 25.7 hundredths.

The clock may be started or stopped at the camera location by two momentary control keys located on the clock base, so arranged as to discharge polarised condensers in opposite directions, and thus actuate relays which engage pawl and ratchet clutch mechanisms which in turn positively start or stop the clock dials. Alternatively the timing system may be started by a switch from some location remote from the camera.

The frequency generator

The frequency generator unit is a portable unit containing an automatically temperature controlled tuning fork and an amplifier to increase the output level to a suitable value for the operation of at least two motor clock units. The primary purpose of this unit is to provide a sufficiently precise basic time rate for the system, and a secondary service is to provide operating current for the circuit.

The tuning fork vibrates at 200 cycles per second, the vibration being started and sustained by the interaction of magnetic coils. Its temperature is controlled by electric heater elements which are in turn controlled by a mercury column thermostat embedded in the metal of the fork. The fork assembly is sealed in a heavily heat insulated metal enclosure. This heat regulation is such as to permit the fork to maintain the required precision over a temperature range of -20 to +120 deg. F. The primary requirement of this fork is temperature stability and it is, therefore, essential that the fork be connected and allowed to reach stable temperature for at least one hour before time observations are made. The fork will maintain a precision of 1 : 25,000 over the previously mentioned temperature range and with the commercial variations of amplifier gain and characteristic if the specified requirements as to operating voltage adjustment and circuit operation checking are correctly observed.

In conclusion, it will be evident that the performance of this timing system is comparable with relatively high precision methods of laboratory practice, and will provide a commercial tool capable of laboratory precision.

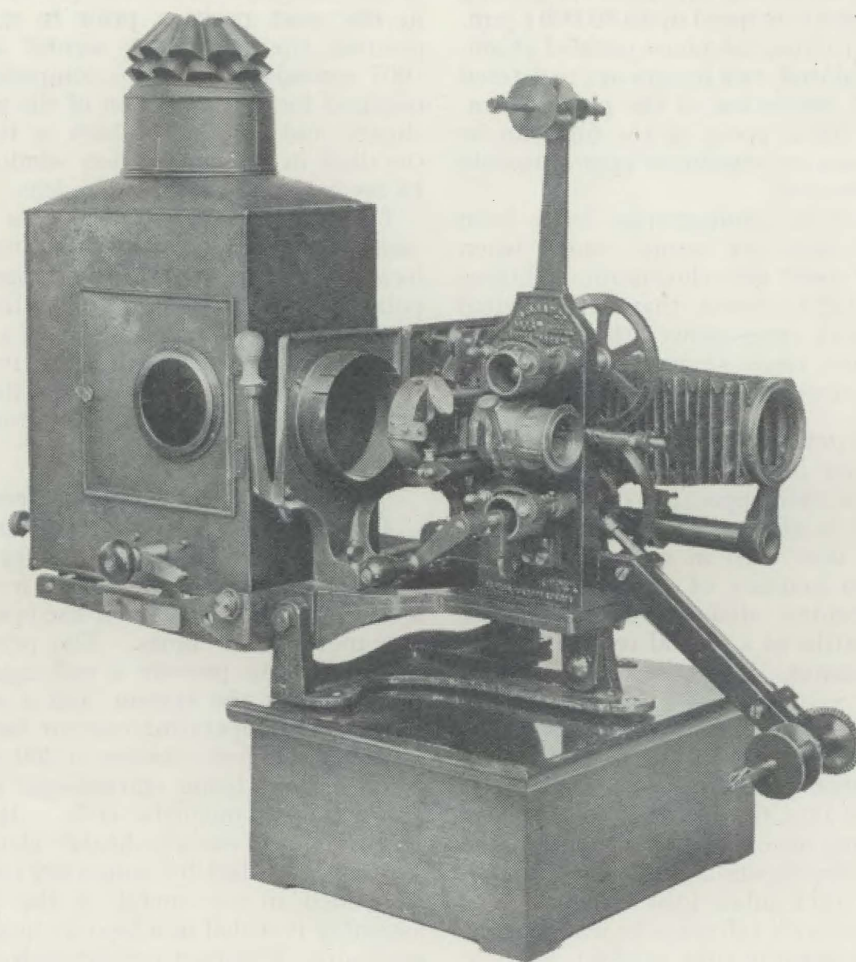
[The two previous articles in this series described Dr. Canti's Photomicrograph Cinema Installation at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and Dr. Russell J. Reynolds' X-Ray Cinematography Installation.]

EVOLUTION OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

With special reference to the collection of historical apparatus in the
Science Museum at South Kensington

No. 3 EVOLUTION OF THE CINEMA PROJECTOR

R. W. Paul's
1906 "Reliance"
projector.



It might be regarded as a wilful paradox to maintain that the cinema projectors used for theatre projection have not altered radically in the course of the last 30 years. Nevertheless it is true that the changes which they have undergone have been changes of detail, not of fundamental principle or essential parts.

The Science Museum collection naturally contains a large proportion of experimental instruments which lie outside the main path of commercial design and thus may tend to induce misleading notions of an eventful and variegated past for the present-day projector.

Early and modern projectors compared

This impression may be corrected by going straight from the Ross projector, an essentially modern machine which catches the eye at the beginning of the corridor, to R. W. Paul's 1906 "Reliance" projector (see illustration). It will be

seen that all the essential parts of the Ross machine are present in the Paul machine, except the flicker-blade on the shutter. Paul aimed at minimising flicker by the use of a very rapid picture-shift. Mr. A. S. Newman, to whom I appealed for information, tells me that the first steps towards the use of a flicker blade were made by Charles Urban, who added an extra blade of transparent green material to his "Biograph" projector, but that the theoretical basis of the device was first expounded to the Royal Photographic Society in or about the year 1913 by Casimir de Proszynski, whose grasp of his subject so far exceeded his mastery of English that the gravity of the occasion escaped contemporary notice.

Early Paul projectors

The collection is well provided with early Paul projectors, going as far back as 1896. This model employed two intermittent sprockets, one above

and one below the gate, but had no steady-running sprockets to mediate between the intermittent and the drag of the spools. In the 1903 model a steady-running sprocket has been added above the gate, but both intermittents are retained. The absence of a steady-running sprocket below the gate arouses a suspicion that the film simply ran out into a container after projection. In the 1906 model already referred to a lower steady-running sprocket has been added and the intermittent sprocket above the gate done away with. Paul experimented with many varieties of Maltese Cross and movements for 3, 4, or 7-armed crosses are displayed.

Edison, with his uncanny knack of being right, adopted the 4-armed cross as early as the 1899 projection kinetoscope, shown in an adjoining case. He also, of course, originated the standard width and perforation of film. The edifice which has arisen on the foundations he laid down is not, of course, beyond the reach of theoretical criticism. The flicker blades waste light and the perforations crack prematurely owing to the stresses which they undergo while the film is jerked through the gate. The collection, as has been said, contains a good selection of the efforts made to circumvent these defects. There is a very impressive-looking optical compensation machine for non-intermittently run film next to the Ross projector, and there are numerous "beater" movements and friction-roller movements designed in some cases to dispense with perforations and in others to relieve them of the worst part of their task. In actual commercial practice, however, the drawbacks of these methods have proved greater than their advantages.

The Ross and Paul projectors

The Ross machine differs from a modern theatre machine principally in the absence of a sound-head. The idea of combining picture and sound was, of course, as old as Edison's early experiments. It was never entirely lost sight of—in fact, the year 1908 simply teems with patents for tying gramophones to projectors in various ways and Lauste's sound-on-film patents date back to 1906. As long, however, as the film was only able to talk but could not shout to large audiences the idea had no commercial value. It was really the invention of the amplification valve and loud speaker which altered this state of affairs. When sound did arrive it did not, as matters turned out, affect the design of the projector very vitally. Of course, quiet running became of paramount importance, and this led to a more boxed-in type of mechanism. For a short time indeed uneasy rumours went round that the exigencies of sound-on-film would lead to a wider film-standard, but these have long since died down.

The Ross machine is therefore in essence a modern machine and yet does not differ from the Paul machine in any fundamental respect. Perhaps the most important difference between the two is the method in which the light of the arc is concentrated on the film. Paul, following the standard practice of his time used as condensers two plano convex

lenses (not shown in the exhibit) placed in front of his arc. The drawback of this system, which is necessarily employed with the filament lamps of substandard projectors, is that if the lenses are thin they have a long focal length and consequently collect a narrow cone of light only, while if they are thick they waste a lot of light by absorption. The Ross machine shows the alternative system known as the mirror arc which employs a large concave mirror placed behind the arc instead of the lenses placed in front of it. The mirror arc avoids loss by absorption.

Improvements in the manufacture of heat-resisting glass and heat-resisting reflective surfaces made the mirror arc feasible soon after 1920. Since then there have been many improvements in the details of arc design, but in principle the system of illumination for theatre projection has remained unaltered.

Non-theatrical projection

Light-sources for non-theatrical projection on the other hand have a somewhat chequered history. Up to the year 1923 when Kodak 16 mm. film reached this country—to be followed in 1924 by Pathé 9.5 mm.—the designers of home apparatus were concentrating on lightly built 35 mm. machines carrying both spools above the projection head. The newest Bell Howell 16 mm. machines are familiarising the eye again with this sort of lay out. These early home projectors used 6 volt or 12 volt lamps somewhat similar to motor headlamps. The maximum wattage of these lamps was about 60, but they gave a remarkably good picture, and the light was as nearly "cold" as any effective projection light that has yet been discovered. However, the danger of igniting celluloid film does not come from the projection lamp only, and the obsolescence of these machines in favour of substandard was certainly justifiable from the safety point of view. In fact it would certainly be a good thing if the present-day descendants of this type, the cheap toy projectors which take just enough 35 mm. film to get a house well alight, could somehow be banished from our shops. There is, however, a type of non-theatre 35 mm. machine which has a respectable past and a promising future, that is the enclosed portable designed for use in large lecture-halls and similar places. When home projectors employed the low voltage 30 or 60 watt lamps just mentioned, this type of projector was employing high voltage 250 watt lamps. These were followed by 500 watt and 1,000 watt 100 volt lamps, with the alternative, for those possessing alternating current, of 750 watt and 900 watt low voltage lamps. Recent improvements in lamp manufacture have introduced 1,000 watt high voltage lamps which run these low voltage lamps close in efficiency, and are more convenient to use.

The evolution of 16 mm. projection lamps has been spectacular in the extreme. The old Kodascopes normally burned 100 volts at 100 watts or 50 volts at 200 watts. The filaments of these lamps were threaded upon a single plane. So long

as Kodaks had a monopoly, and 16 mm. work was confined to the home and the small assembly-room this state of affairs satisfied everyone, as these lamps gave a well-lit picture 3-6 ft. wide and often enjoyed a life-time of several hundred hours. Soon, however, rival projector-makers appeared on the scene and the ambitions of sub-standard film began to expand rapidly. High lamp-wattage was—Heaven knows why—chosen as the field for the resultant competitive struggle, and with biplane and triplane arrangements of the filament the 400 watt mark was soon passed. Further improvement in heat-resisting glass and the introduction of the coiled-coil filament sent the wattage soaring to 500, 750 and 1,000. In the excitement of the race, the question of how soon the lamp would blacken, how soon it would burn out altogether, and how much of its light ultimately reached the screen tended to be forgotten. These 16 mm. lamps of restricted dimensions must not, of course, be confused with 35 mm. lamps of similar wattage, the size of which allows their designer reasonable scope.

Sub-standard machines still show the variety in their intermittent movements which 35 mm. machines showed 25 years ago. Claws, crosses, and beaters all continue to compete on equal terms. Which movement is destined to prevail in this field, and which to stock the apparatus collections of the future it would be rash to prophesy.

H. D. W.

THE CINEMA AT THE BRUSSELS EXHIBITION

Present tendencies in the use of projection for display purposes are well illustrated at the Brussels Exhibition this year. Two points are especially noticeable—the absence of 35 mm. film and the rarity of endless-band projectors. At the Paris Exhibition of 1931 there were some two dozen daylight displays, mostly from 35 mm. endless band machines. The Chicago World's Fair of 1933 contained 91 daylight cinemas, all 16 mm., and many run on the endless-band principle.

The Brussels Exhibition contained very few daylight cinemas and seemed to concentrate rather on the projection of fixed slides. In theory this should be a sound policy, but in practice the quality of projection obtained was very poor, and compared very badly with the back-lit enlargements of photographs which also were a prominent feature on many stands. Almost every National Pavilion had its miniature cinema theatre attached, and I got the impression that all the projectors used were 16 mm. and most of them 16 mm. sound-film.

Some extremely interesting experiments in instructional display were staged by the "Albertum," a pavilion devoted to scientific and educational subjects. Several biological subjects suitable for cyclic treatment were run in endless bands behind a row of small daylight screens. It had been originally intended to run these bands, which were about 8 ft. long, continually, but the wear on the film proved too great, and an arrangement was substituted by means of which each visitor could cause the film to run for 45 seconds by pressing a button. Even with this method the films have to be renewed every two or three days. A full length film, however, which is being shown on a Siemens automatic projector has been found to last some two months, running eight hours a day.

NEW APPARATUS VIEWED

THE AGFA "DOMESTINO" PROJECTOR, Agfa Photo, Ltd., 4, Lawrence Street, London, W.C.2.

The Agfa Company are introducing into this country a 16 mm. projector priced at £17—the "Domestino"—which deserves attention on account of its compactness. No exterior resistance is used. The motor drives the mechanism by direct gear instead of the more usual belt, and this no doubt makes for reliability, but not for silent running. A 100-watt lamp is used, and a still-picture device is incorporated. The machine I was shown gave a light output of about 15 lumens, so that I should expect from it a reasonably well lit picture 3 ft. wide.

THE "PEERLESS" FILM PRESERVATIVE PROCESS

Mr. D. Daponte, of the Film Laboratories, 8, Longacre, W.C., kindly gave me an opportunity this summer of testing out the efficacy of the "Peerless" film hardening process which he has brought over to this country from America. The peculiarity of this process is that the films do not have to be unreeled and treated inch by inch—they are simply placed in an air-tight chamber and submitted to the action of certain gases. I may confess that when these points were outlined to me my impulse was to wonder whether anything so conveniently simple could really be effective. But the very stringent tests to which I submitted a 1,000 ft. length of 35 mm. non-flam. film which had been treated convinced me of the very real value of the process. The film was green, yet the gate remained free from any accretions. In consequence of this no doubt the perforations stood up remarkably well to the traction of continuous running day in and day out for several days, and at the end there was much less scratching visible than I had reason to expect from my past experience with the projector which I used for the tests. Moreover, I confirmed the claim that oil can be wiped off the treated film with a rag and leave no trace. The "Peerless" process should be useful to all who have any interest in prolonging the useful life of each copy of any film which is to undergo heavy use. It is, of course, applicable to celluloid film.

G. B. E. "SUPERLUX" Model "D" 16mm. sound-on-film Projector, £250. G.B. Equipments, Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1.

The new G.B. "D" projector was demonstrated at the Academy Cinema on October 1st. This projector represents a step in advance of the three models already brought out by the Gaumont British Company, as it mounts a projection head with higher light power and employs a new and improved amplification system for which an undistorted output of 12 watts is claimed. The projection head is the well-known Cinepro "Super," using a 375 watt lamp and giving a light output of 250 lumens. Having regard to the present importance of the question as to where exactly the field of 16 mm. film ends, and that of 35 mm. film begins, this demonstration was of great interest. On the whole, one may say that the claim that this apparatus would in average circumstances cater successfully for an audience of a thousand people was made good. The quality of the sound was really excellent, and seemed to fill the Academy auditorium quite adequately, though, of course, it was difficult to judge, there being only some two or three dozen persons present, what the effect would have been in a full hall.

The picture was about 14 feet wide—large enough that is to say for a hall nearly 120 feet long—and was quite satisfactory in its brilliance. Rather to my surprise there was no trace of grain visible even from the front seats, but a certain prevailing lack of clear-cut definition was noticeable. As this defect varied a good deal from time to time, I supposed it to be due to varying success in the optical reduction process.

In any event, the impression given was that the average 16 mm. print would not stand up to much greater enlargement than that which we were looking at. On the other hand, it has to be borne in mind that it is very rare for educational displays to attempt to cater for larger audiences than a thousand.

H. D. W.

ACADEMY CINEMA 165, Oxford Street

presents famous international films

GERRARD 2981

(Organiser: ELSIE COHEN)

Now Showing — Alexandrov's "JAZZ COMEDY" (U)

Something New—A Riot of Fun from Russia!

Future Presentations Include :—

PAULA WESSELY in "EPISODE" (A)

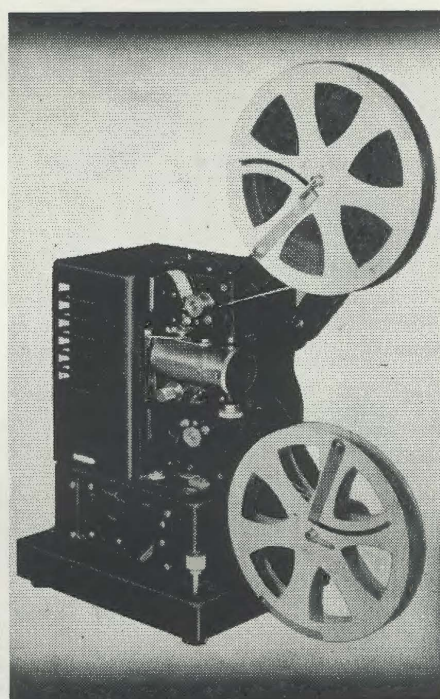
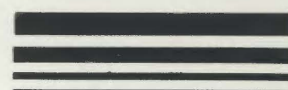
RUDOLF FORSTER in "HOHE SCHULE" or "THE SECRET OF CAVELLI" (A)

ROBERT LYNEN in "SANS FAMILLE" (A)

NOTICES OF NEW PRESENTATIONS WILL BE SENT ON RECEIPT OF NAME AND ADDRESS



A
great
aid to
EDUCATION



World Educational Congress, Oxford,
AUGUST 10th—17th, 1935

SIEMENS 16 m.m. PROJECTOR

projected the BRIGHTEST PICTURE

- " " only STILL PICTURE
- " " only CONTINUOUS PICTURE
- " " FIRST X-RAY SOUND PICTURE

PRICES

£36—£60—£100

Complete ready for use

Full details free on application to

CINEPRO LIMITED

1 NEW BURLINGTON ST., LONDON, W.1

Telephone :
Regent 2085

Telegrams :
"Cinepro, Piccy, London."

WORLD FILM NEWS

and CINEMA QUARTERLY

SOMETHING NEW IN FILM JOURNALISM WILL APPEAR SHORTLY
COMPLETE INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE SUPPORTED BY AUTHORITATIVE
ARTICLES BY THE WORLD'S LEADING FILM-MAKERS AND CRITICS

Published by— **CINEMA CONTACT LTD.**

Oxford House, Oxford Street, London, W.1

24, N.W. Thistle Street Lane, Edinburgh, 2

The **MARCH *of* PROGRESS**

● ENLIGHTENED APPROBATION

following important meetings of educationalists who asked to see G. B. I. Films at Scarborough, Loughborough, St. Andrew's, Oxford and Norwich.

● PROGRESSIVE PRODUCTION

is to be found in the creative work of the G. B. I. unit. This has been widely noticed in this country and abroad, especially in their latest work, such as "Citizens of the Future," "Shipyard," "The Face of Britain," "This Was England," "The Quiet of the Country," "Physical Training

Infants," "The Sea Urchin," "The Blowfly," "Tennis Instruction," etc.

● ADAPTABLE PROJECTION

can be installed by G. B. E. technicians at shortest notice. Whether hired for the day, hire purchase, or kept for portable use between classrooms, one of the four available models will be suitable for individual needs.

● CO-OPERATIVE CONSULTATION

with eminent specialists, experienced film-users and highly skilled technicians enables G. B. Instructional Films Bureau to give you considered and experienced advice.

Consult

G. B. INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS BUREAU

Representing both G. B. Instructional Films and Equipments

The leaders of Practical Educational Cinema

FILM HOUSE • WARDOUR STREET • LONDON • W.1

